

PUNCH

Vol. CCXXXIV. No. 6142 MAY 7 1938

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CRITICS report that Hollywood's newest process, "Cinemiracle," reduces all predecessors to magic lantern level, and is a must for British cinemas. As no British cinema is equipped to show it, and conversion costs are estimated at £20,000, filmgoers must resign themselves to even longer intervals for the sale of ice-cream.

MALTA's "pay up or get out" was bound to catch on. Last week's Libyan demands for restrictions on the use of Britain's bases there combined with £4,000,000-worth more British aid annually, already suggested the improved form, "pay up and get out."

AMERICAN prison inmates are hit by the recession, many due for parole being kept inside because they cannot give assurances that they have employment waiting. It is particularly frustrating for those who were looking forward to going back to their old jobs.

THE GREAT gulf between life in uniform and out of it is pointed strongly in an official resettlement bulletin issued to ex-National Servicemen: they are urged to keep their



temper when confronted with a difficult employer, even if "every decent instinct prompts you to slug him."

NANCY, LADY ASTOR, who long ago admitted that her face was two profiles stuck together, did not care for the kiss

from South Africa's High Commissioner Dr. Holloway. "I will not be kissed by prominent people," she said, and later referred to the "pernicious" practice in her speech. All in all, the Doctor must have wondered whether it had been worth it.

SCOTTISH COUNCILS have been told by the Scottish Tourist Board that they should blush at the small amounts they



have contributed to its work. The incident will be featured in the Board's forthcoming publicity under "endearing traditional characteristics."

"Earl Attlee, carrying a posy of spring flowers, paid ohmage to Shakespeare's birthday yesterday . . ."—*News Chronicle*
 Midland Electricity Bard.

NOTHING has paid off at the Whitehall Theatre but broad, broad farce, says a critic, and wonders why. Could it have anything to do with the address?

THE Lord's Day Observance Society's triumph over the Bishop of Coventry seemed to be carrying the "holier than thou" attitude a bit too far.

Stop Press

"STAND FIRM!" called Mr. Cousins to the busmen,
 And took up his position at their side
 Prepared to make a fuss
 If they, instead of us,
 Were the people who got taken for a ride.



Punch Diary

MR. NEHRU, following the example certainly of Mr. Ben-Gurion and possibly of Cincinnatus, is asking his supporters for time off to think. The Sabbatical year or term is one of the inventions which have done more to hold down the breakdown rate in universities even than the invention of the detective story. To see it spreading into politics is a cheering reminder that in the modern world sanity is showing signs of winning through. In the past, time off to think has generally been provided by the electoral success of the Opposition, and statesmen have been less convalescent than fallen. I hope that the custom of simply saying "I'm flat. I want to read and think and plan ahead without being badgered to deal with short-lived urgencies" spreads. One thing that probably stops it is the difficulty, if you are not Mr. Nehru, of making a comeback. It would be to the public advantage to give men who have been some years in office time off to recharge their intellectual batteries. If they simply lazed, all the better.

A Grievous Loss

THE tumult and the shouting has died at last. It seems incredible that *My Fair Lady* has actually had its several first nights, leaving us with nothing but the continual drone of its music throughout the land, and the polite haggling for tickets in *The Times* Personal column. Something has gone out of our lives. I tell you solemnly, there are young people alive to-day who can hardly remember those far-off days when we were not anxiously looking forward to the return of Liza to her native shore—those calm, unruffled years before our travelled friends began

to smuggle in the LP for us, and we wondered how we could possibly bear the anxious time of waiting. Well, it's all over now. We waited for Godot, and he never came, and that was splendid. But we waited for our fair lady, and here she is, and what can life hold for us now? We could go and see it, but that doesn't seem enough. Won't somebody find something else for us to wait for?

Dying Fall

WHEN a lady complained last week to the Angmering Parish Council that although she turned her radio up she could still hear the noises from a nearby slaughterhouse, she was making a point which I ignore gladly, preferring to make another; namely, that neither Marconi nor Mr. (as he then was) Reith fully foresaw the uses to which broadcast programmes would ultimately be put. The idea that they are meant to be listened to has long been obsolete, as no one will contest. Whether or not "Lift Up Your Hearts" has started is merely an indication (to many people) that there is, or is not, time for a third piece of toast. A symphony orchestra, pouring its hundred hearts into the Sibelius No. 2, is a noise in the corner of the room which has the merit of being more companionable than silence. All this is accepted. But for any programme's sole function to be the obliteration of the death-cries of pigs seems a little hard not only on Marconis, Reiths, their successors and assigns, but on the artist in the studio giving of

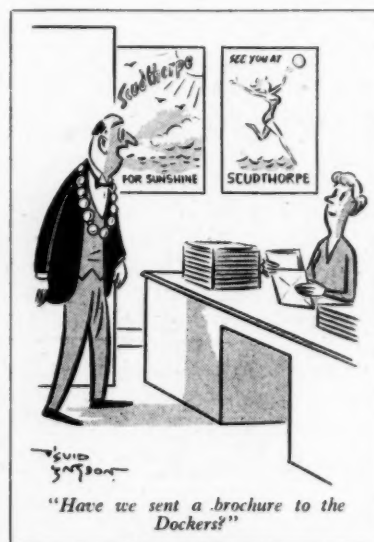
his dedicated best on the reasonable assumption that someone is listening. His only consolation perhaps is that nowadays, nine times out of ten, he isn't in the studio at all. Nothing is but several thousand feet of magnetic tape.

The Contemporary Tram

I SHOULD think Brussels must be the only great city left which prides itself on its trams. To celebrate the "Expo" it has put into service a new series of long, low, streamlined vehicles with a fairing at the base of the trolley to secure (no doubt) a smooth flow of air at high speed. These new trams are equipped with handy little tables between each pair of seats, for all the world like the carriages of the *Train Bleu*, and in front of the driver is stencilled the minatory legend NE PAS PARLER AU WATTMAN. *Wattman!*—somehow there is a science-fictional ring about him that was never achieved by the goggled *conducteur* who used to drive the tram in a more leisurely age.

Art with a Capital A

NOW that we can see John Merton's picture of Lady Dalkieth in the, so to speak, flesh, I find its most interesting aspect is that this time the ballyhoo has been completely official. Just about the time of Mr. Butler's "Unknown Political Prisoner" (whatever became of that?) the Academy seems to have realized that it couldn't compete by the old haphazard method of letting the press choose the Picture of the Year. So we've had two Annigonis and Sir Alfred Munnings' semi-official swipe at modern art, and now this; all, as it were, inescapable. The hanging committee have shot off so much ammunition this year—A-certificate, absurdly pretty sitter, secret process, 1,500 hours to paint, and so on—that they must be fretting now about 1959. Anything, they must already be saying, anything novel, so long as it isn't new.



"Have we sent a brochure to the Dockers?"

An Outline of Modern Sunday Newspapers

Next week *Punch*, following the example of the two intellectual Sunday papers, will publish a Brief Pictorial Guide to all the contemporary movements in modern Sunday Newspaperism.



WITH APOLOGIES TO JOHN RALPH MERTON.

PROBLEM PICTURE

EAST IS WEST . . .

A scientist's contribution to the discussion of the cold war and the menace of nuclear weapons

TAKE OVER THE FUTURE

By J. BRONOWSKI

BARELY five years ago it was the Russians who had the reputation of backing away from every offer. They seemed, in Stalin's last years, to be always indignant and always refusing, and the effect in the end was comic. We used to keep a sporting score of the number of times that Mr. Molotov used the veto. And it was a standard joke that to understand Russian one needed only to know the word *niet*.

All this seems long ago; in five years



Western diplomacy has turned the joke on itself. The Russians have learnt the trick of making proposals, and more often than not we have backed away in dismal alarm. Alarm at what? Mr. Khrushchev proposes a meeting; we make a list of objections as long as one of Mr. Khrushchev's letters. Mr. Khrushchev announces that he will blow off no more hydrogen bombs, and Mr. Dulles is outraged at this bare-faced propaganda. Three weeks earlier Mr. Dulles was equally outraged at the offer of the Bolshoi Ballet to dance in New York.

The rest of the world finds our alarms as comic as we used to find the Russians'. For five years now Western diplomats have too often found a difficulty for every solution. The word "unacceptable" on their lips has become a by-word at which other nations smile as they once smiled at *niet*. We give the impression that we think the Russians so clever that we dare not trust ourselves at a conference table with them. And worse, because it is more nearly true,

we give the impression that we have lost confidence in our own initiative.

There is an obvious reason why the West finds it hard to negotiate. One must go to a conference with some room to manoeuvre: with minimum as well as maximum demands, and with some elbow-room between them. One must know what is the most that one hopes for, and what the least that one would make do with.

But Mr. Dulles and his colleagues seem unable to form any minimum demands. They simply want Russian communism to disappear: no more and no less. There are, it seems, no treaties, no agreements, no zones of influence which would satisfy them, because the Russians cannot be trusted. As for communism in China, they refuse to recognize that it has ever appeared.

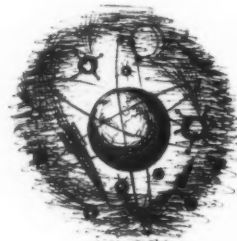
This, then, is not merely a diplomatic impasse: it is more general and more profound. The failure of our policy is at bottom a failure of ideas. Our



thought is stagnating because it is wishful; we muddle along obstinately without making up our minds—our thinking minds—what we can get, and how. We want to protect the backward countries from communism, of course; and for this purpose we offer them weapons. We seem to have no idea what makes communism attractive to the public opinion of these countries.

Communism is attractive to the dispossessed of Asia and Africa because, chide as we may, they see it as an ideal. It is a complex ideal to them, and envy and revenge have a part in it, as well as the desire for freedom and dignity. But earthy as some of these motives are, at their centre is a single aspiration: the aspiration for a better life.

It is hopeless to underrate this human



aspiration: and it is useless to call it selfish and materialist. To the people who, after centuries of poverty, now see the hope of a decent life, communism has the same force that the Sermon on the Mount had for the early Christians. The Sputnik was as vivid a symbol to the Asians and Africans as the star of Bethlehem was to the oppressed Jews.

It is worth lingering on the flight of the Sputnik, which made a deep impression everywhere. President Eisenhower explained that the Russians had launched a satellite "by yoking their people to this effort." He seemed to think that if the little dog Laika were a free agent she would come down in America and ask for political asylum. (We leaned to the belief that she would prefer to come down in England and call on the R.S.P.C.A.) In practice the politicians of the West treated the Sputnik as a weapon; the plans that it prompted them to make were military.

But the people struggling out of poverty saw the Sputnik quite differently. To them it was a demonstration

that the ideas of communism are practical, and that its achievements are ahead of the West. This is graver than any military threat; and if we miss it we are as blind as the Romans were. No doubt some wise Roman told his government that the star of Bethlehem might one day bombard Rome, and advised it to build rocket bases to forestall the day. But Rome fell to an ideal, and it is communism as an ideal that threatens us.

Communism offers the poorer countries the tempting hope that they can raise their standard of life by the year 2000 as the Russians raised theirs since the year 1917. Of course our standard of life is higher than the Russians; but are we offering anyone our standard? The have-nots think that we offer nothing: that we want only to keep things the way they are. This is the poverty of our diplomacy, and it is a poverty of ideas: that the rest of the world sees us only as defenders of the past. We point righteously to the constant changes in Russian politics. But the backward peoples favour change; to them we are dinosaurs dying in our armour.

Arabs and Jews alike, Indians and Pakistanis—however much they lower at one another, they have one thing in common. They have no stake in the past; their hopes lie in the future. The diplomatic offensive of Russia rests on this and on nothing else. The Russians display communism as a faith for the future. The present, they say, may have to make sacrifices for the future; but those who believe in the future—and here Russia points to herself—can remake themselves in forty-odd years as she has done. History is on our side, said Karl Marx; and to-day communism puts this very practically by claiming that it holds the keys to the future.

The most attractive and the most powerful of these keys, of course, is technical skill. The Russians have a large output of scientists and technicians—roughly ten times as many as Britain has, in a population about four

times as large as ours. As a result, the Russians can offer at least ten times as many technical men as we can to any country that asks for them; and day by day, up and down the world, Russian engineers are coming to take the place that once British engineers had.

But more than their numbers it is the status of these men which makes the poorer nations feel that they have the future on their side. The Russians count no one as educated who has not been grounded in the fundamental ideas of science, and they present their scientists as an aristocracy. A scientist is even entitled to independence of thought: there were Russian scientists who refused to make an atomic bomb for Stalin, and they rode out his displeasure.

So the dispossessed peoples, who rightly equate their future with science, go on and wrongly equate science with Russia.

For of course we have a continuing tradition in science which is greater than the Russian. A glance at the Nobel Prizes that we have won since the war in every field will show this. Our achievements in these twelve years have been outstanding, in atomic energy and in antibiotics, in radio astronomy and in the chemistry of life. But who in our diplomatic missions grows lyrical about this work? Who understands these intellectual adventures of the West, which are as lively to-day as in the year that Galileo died and Newton was born?

We have a vision of the future, but we fail to make others see it. The way in which we told the story of Zeta is characteristic. This was our real reply to the Sputnik; and we first delayed and then muffed it until its meaning was lost. The reason is that our public life is still dominated by men to whom science is a poor relation; and as a result we seem to the world to treat the future as a poor and unwelcome relation.

We are making a culture as forward-looking as the Russians. And because



Daumier's *Pedipulator, or Peace and the Bomb*

ours is a democratic culture, science is more deeply rooted here: its freedom is not a privilege but a necessity. But we are failing to make our life shine in the backward countries because our diplomacy is still tied to our past. They do not know our achievements, measured in education and medicine and technical advance and human welfare here at home—because our missions seldom boast about what they regard as these non-U manifestations of the Welfare State.

The tension between East and West is a struggle for the public opinion of the poorer countries, and this is a struggle between ideals. They see communism as one ideal, and we have to show Western democracy as a larger ideal. Instead, we have practised a passive and spiritless vision, a diplomacy in retreat and have shown democracy only as a shadow from the past. If we are to inspire the people rising from poverty, we must inspire ourselves; we must give them a sense of optimism, of marching with history and science—a sense of the future. Mr. Khrushchev is not the figure of the future, but we have turned him into a very good likeness by default. I suggest that it is time that we take over the future.

The views expressed in this discussion do not necessarily represent those of PUNCH. The last contribution, by ALISTAIR COOKE, will appear next week.

**A new series of articles,
"THE SEVEN AGES OF HUMOUR,"
will start on May 21.**

Inspectors on Ice

By H. F. ELLIS

THERE are going to be some good jobs to be had if the American proposal for an international inspectorate of the Arctic regions is ever—what is the word?—implementation-ized. Chilly jobs right at the start perhaps, a little lonely and lacking in social life in the early days; but when the thing gets properly under way, when the great Inspectorate buildings go up on Cape Chelyuskin and Wrangell Island and Point Barrow, with air-conditioning throughout and cocktail parties every other evening, I don't see that anyone could wish for a snuggler

billet than to be Deputy Sub-inspector of Novaya Zemlya or Controller of the Kara Sea. Properly organized it could be like the dear old days of the Geneva Secretariat in its heyday, when every second person one met had a sister or an aunt busy drinking White Ladies out there for a very reasonable honorarium.

Detailed proposals are not yet available, but basically the job is to see that nobody does anything inside the Arctic Circle. This is going to take an awful lot of paper. It will also call for a considerable staff. People talk about the

Arctic Circle as if it were just that white bit at the top, but realists like myself are not content until they have multiplied $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees by 69 (which is about the number of miles in a degree of latitude) and come to the conclusion that the Circle has a radius of over 1,600 miles. Working on from there, anyone can see that 1600 squared times π is a whacking big territory to keep under observation. I make it nearly four times the size of Europe, and very much tougher going at that.

A point to be borne in mind by parents who may be thinking of putting their children's names down for this worthwhile racket concerns the obliquity of the ecliptic. It is not just a coincidence that the $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of latitude between the North Pole and the Arctic Circle equal the angle made by the equator with the plane of the ecliptic. Oh, no. We don't do things in a slapdash way up north. The Arctic Circle in fact circumscribes the area within which there are periods when the sun doesn't set and other periods when it doesn't rise. The papers have kept pretty quiet about this, but that is how things are. Now then, the periods of continuous darkness are of course longer near the Pole, and it is there (at the centre and summit; in a Churchillian phrase) that most of the paper work seems likely to be done. One cannot carry out much efficient inspecting, apart from routine radar sweeps, when it is pitch dark for months on end. This celestial accident is bound to affect the organization of the Inspectorate, and should certainly be remembered by applicants for jobs, assuming they will be allowed to express a preference for some particular locality.

The broad general outline of the organization, as it may ultimately take shape, begins to appear. Most of the actual inspecting will willy-nilly be done on the fringes of the Circle, where the light will often be good enough to see that military aerodromes are not being built, rockets are not passing overhead, and in general that no unauthorized person is doing anything anywhere. From these outlying posts, on or about latitude $66\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}\text{N}$, *nil* reports will be rushed along concentric channels of communication to the great central clearing



Eric Burgin

houses at the Pole, where they will be collated by artificial light, translated into forty or fifty languages, and forwarded to interested Governments for study and filing. At the actual constitution, billeting arrangements and duties of the outer posts it is perhaps too early to hazard a guess, but since their primary task will be to report on the movement (or rather the absence of movement) of aircraft it seems likely that they may be organized somewhat on the lines of our own Observer Corps and will require enormous quantities of rum and tea. The work even so will be monotonous, involving as it does the constant scrutiny of nothing, and frequent reliefs will be necessary to avoid the danger of overstrain. The risk that one or more of this devoted international band may go mad and begin to vary their nil returns with reports of immense flotillas of warplanes, thus triggering off a world catastrophe, must be guarded against—perhaps by some adaptation of the American “fail-safe” system. All reports could, for example, be treated by the Central Secretariat as *nil* reports unless endorsed by at least sixteen observers of different nationalities operating from suitable stations nearer the Pole. This inner ring of inspectors should probably patrol latitude 70 N or thereabouts, the so-called Twilight Zone. To go farther north, as a glance at any map of the area, shows, is to risk heavy losses of personnel in the Arctic Ocean.

The problem of what the Secretariat is to do should it finally be convinced that ill-disposed aircraft or missiles are heading across its territory remains unsolved. Those members of it who have been recruited from the threatened country will no doubt favour an immediate message to their Government. Others, more level-headed, will argue that to take such a step will almost inevitably mean that a second force of aircraft, heading in the opposite direction, will shortly cross the Circle; there will then be a risk, in the confusion entailed by so complicated a double movement, that the whole reporting system will break down. The men after all will lack experience. It is one of the grave drawbacks of the proposed system that an organization whose sole purpose is to report the absence of any activity cannot possibly be trained to send in



accurate reports about anything but *nil*. One fears that some time may elapse, after the initial alarm, before the Central Secretariat has all the necessary information checked, coded and ready

to send off to the two interested Governments.

It is not much consolation to remember that the Governments will by then be no longer interested.

A Pace or Two Apart

Career of a Mixed-up Kid

By GWYN THOMAS

MR. RAWLINS rustled a newspaper he held in his hand to bring us to attention for the talk he was to give us on “Career Patterns.”

“I have seen a very interesting piece of news in this paper,” he said. “A boy who was once a pupil at this school, Iestyn Cowie, has been adopted as a prospective parliamentary candidate for an English constituency. I am glad to hear this. Cowie is likely to bring back into British politics an element of tension which it has not had since the passing of the great flamboyant amateurs of last century. I always noted in Cowie a weird dichotomy of impulses; on the one hand there was a darkening neurotic blockage which could make him at times one of the most crazily diffident boys; at other times he would show a self-confidence so hot and unreasoning you felt like crowning him with an ice block. In a society as loaded with anomalies as ours, a shipload of schizophrenes like Cowie might do the world of good at Westminster. He would introduce a

stammer into legislation that would shake loose a lot of the present rather complacent top-soil.

“When Cowie was in the Lower Sixth I noticed that he was developing a very pleasant clear tenor voice. At the same time I was being worried in the morning assembly by a fifth-form group which was making a stonier road of adolescence than any band of maturing boys I have known before or since. They made a cult of gruffness and as soon as they saw I was being driven mad by the way they had of sinking leagues below the sheet music and ruining the harmonic line of every item in the hymnal they worked to a programme. They would take the trouble of asking what were my best loved hymns and then they would request these hymns from Mr. Wigram, who was helping with the choral music at the time. At the next assembly one of these hymns would go down as sensationally as the *Titanic*, despite the fact that I would be among these ruffians, jabbing, cuffing

and encouraging and giving them a clear lead with my own high baritone and reliable sense of pitch. So I stationed the boy Cowie among them to serve as a kind of vocal lighthouse trying to beam these dedicated aberrants back on to the page the rest of us were looking at.

"This was a mistake. Cowie was on the tall side and most of these unGregorian hooligans were notably squat and this seemed to give their sense of mischief a more malignant spring. It was like offering a year-old bull to thirty picadors, and as soon as they got the feel of Cowie's gentleness they realized that they were on to something even more toothsome than laying a thousand bruises on every chant I had learned to love at my mother's knee standing alongside the front-room harmonium.

The rodneys would not sing a note but would urge Cowie to let it rip. His voice would rise in that part of the hall as flawless as a blackbird's. Then the baiting would begin. Their favourite tactic was to stare at Cowie and form their lips in the same delicate rounded way as Cowie and just hoot any note he did not happen to be using just then. Or they would pass the word along that all boys should fall silent and Cowie would be left standing there doing a tremendous solo and being reproved by the Headmaster for egomania. This had the worse possible effect on Cowie. He failed to appear in the main hall and he was found locked in the conveniences, declaring that he would settle for this retreat until someone had found him a new set of buttons for his self-confidence.

He had to be coaxed out by me or commanded out by the Headmaster.

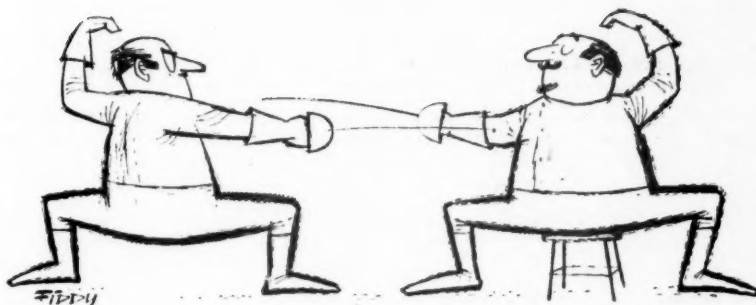
"Yet the very next week Cowie was making a mark as a postman during the Christmas rush. I have never seen a postman carrying a bigger bag than the one they loaded on to Cowie. It must have been stitched from one of the tarpaulins they used as cosies on the heavier vans. He is the one postal worker to get himself into such a knot while on the job that he had come up a hill with both his legs inside the bag. His beat was on that steep hill at the top of which I live. Some joker in the General Post Office told Cowie that the postmaster had his eye on him with a view to a tremendous bonus for the lightning quality Cowie was showing. Cowie outdid himself. For the first



"I dozed off and had the most horrible dream—I dreamt I was falling!"

half-hour of his round he was blurred with speed, shooting from one side of the road to the other, and often he was well ahead of his Post Office arm-band. He would also make matters worse for himself by stopping people in the middle of the road and saying: 'However fallible other social agencies may be, the mails will get through. Trust us, we will not fail.' He had got these slogans from some veteran postmen back at the office and they had worked Cowie into an incandescence of zeal—all, I think, part of a plan on the part of these old voters to kill Cowie and ruin the postage system. One evening, close on Christmas, I saw Cowie on my own porch panting and laughing and grinning after the fashion of a llama, a creature which also works with large burdens and at sharp angles. He was laughing in the high, senseless style of the unheinged, wishing himself a happy thrombosis and handing me a large packaged ham which was clearly addressed to some house on the other side of Mynydd Coch.

"My last extra-mural experience with Cowie was when he did service as a bus conductor. I boarded his bus on the way back from Birchtown. He was delighted to see me, winked as he slapped his money bag and said in his now very powerful tenor, which could have been heard by the people in the bus behind, that he would never dream of charging me for the trip. He looked fiercely around the bus which was full of some fairly homely types and he said that there were louts about whose fare he would double just in order to allow a Brahmin like myself to travel free. This brought a large amount of grunting from the other passengers, who had clearly had enough of Cowie. Then he sat down at my side. He started recalling and reciting his memories of the Old School. I could see people staring uneasily and often out of the window and into the gloom of late evening. At least five persons were carried miles beyond their stops. One farmer was very angry. He wanted to put Cowie off the bus, but Cowie, something of a Philadelphia lawyer, proved to that farmer that this would come under the Mutiny Act of 1710 and carried a sentence of from ten years to the rope. So the farmer, violent by now, turned on me. He claimed that he had heard me egging Cowie on this anti-social antic and he put me off the bus instead. I had the



pleasure of seeing Cowie wave to me from the back window of the bus and trying to tell me of a short cut back to Mynydd Coch.

"The transport company was glad when Cowie's Courtesy Campaign gave them the chance to shoot him out. For a long time Cowie had been complaining that he considered the brusque and rather uncouth manner of some of the other conductors a hindrance to smooth travel in the area. He took to standing on the back platform of the bus and giving people a deep Castilian bow as they came on. I boarded his bus at the stop in Birchtown just before that tremendous bend in the road. Cowie ushered me on, stood with his back to the entrance and gave a bow so thorough some passengers thought he was going to try to pick up used tickets with his teeth to shame them into a little neatness. Came the bend. Cowie was hurtled off, unbalanced and probably half demented by the flow of blood to his head. He went, luckily for him, rolling down a grassy slope that broke his fall. The contents of his money bag went shooting to every corner of the

county. Cowie wanted the passengers to get off and help him in the search but the driver, with a catalogue of oaths that have coloured my view of transport workers ever since, told him to get back on and threatened that when they got to the depot Cowie would be hanged out of hand in the straps of his money bag. Cowie got off at the stop before the depot, leaving his bag, his badges and his bus-company coat on my lap. I can still see the look in the General Manager's eye as I tried to explain to him how I managed to be in possession of these articles."

Mr. Rawlins opened the newspaper and began to read: "Mr. Cowie, after his adoption as Independent candidate, told his audience, 'I will not be tied by prescribed loyalties. I shall submit every situation to an hourly test. My philosophy will be fluid, a running vehicle for dreams and an iron practicality, the final wedding of excelsior and *ad hoc*.'"

Mr. Rawlins put the paper down.

"Given a decade of confusion and a dark corner in which to operate, I am telling you now: watch Cowie."

Omophagists They Call Them

PERTURBED, I read that Mr. Tommy Steele
Was almost torn to pieces by a rout
Of Scotch admirers, and was carried out
Unconscious of his mute, for once, appeal.

I am perturbed because, in times long gone,
On the fierce hills of Thrace, and where the slow
Nile wanders north, in Spain, in Mexico,
There once were comparable goings-on.

Then bull or man or ram was chosen, crowned
With garlands, worshipped, hailed as the life-bringer;
And then the congregation gathered round
And tore him into pieces, which they ate.

It is a comfort for our wounded singer
That his admirers don't go that far—yet.

PETER DICKINSON

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

AL CAPONE'S CAR

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—Within ten minutes of seeing a recent Langdon drawing of Khrushchev studying U.S.A. summit talk plans and instructing a minion to find out if Al Capone's car was still for sale, I came across this report from De Queen, Arkansas, in an American magazine:

"FIRE DESTROYS AL CAPONE'S AUTO FORTRESS.—A £20,000 bullet-proof Cadillac custom sedan which the owner said was built for Chicago gang chief Al Capone has been destroyed in a theater warehouse fire here.

K. Lee Williams of De Queen, who bought the car to publicize the movie, 'Scarface,' said spontaneous combustion of old film apparently started the fire. He said he purchased the 1930 model car in San Francisco and used it in advertising for a few years. Williams said he stored the car after he was told 'to get it off the streets of Tulsa, Okla., or they would blow it to bits and me with it.' Williams did not identify his threateners.

Capone's car had a 16-cylinder engine

and a maximum speed of 140 miles an hour, Williams said. It contained a smoke screen attachment, a police siren, a short wave radio, a secret gun and bomb compartment and a tack-spreading device to puncture tires of pursuing automobiles. Capone used to mount a machine gun in the back seat."

Yours, etc.

E. W. MEAD

Winsted, Conn.

NUCLEAR FISSION

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—Your correspondent F. H. E. Townshend-Rose suggests that the asteroid belt might be the result of the disintegration of a planet by an atomic explosion. After atomic fission, scientists discovered that nuclear fusion created greater energy. Might not the sun have had inhabitants who produced energy by nuclear fusion, which escaped control; thus producing the huge conflagration which we see to-day? A heat beyond 10,000,000 degrees centigrade is required before nuclear fusion takes place, i.e. the heat of the sun.

Yours faithfully,

S. C. SOUTHWART

London, W.1

Getting There Without Buses

Whenever a bus-strike threatens, those little questionnaires about alternative means of transport start circulating among the workers. This all-purpose document may help in countering them.

1 Yes, I am within walking distance. At a reasonable average pace of two and a half miles an hour I reckon I could walk to the office in the morning, walk home in the evening, and still put in four hours' good work, including my lunch hour, without actually having to travel in the dark. If, on the other hand, the question means "Am I within comfortable walking distance?" the answer is no.

2. I have a bicycle, but it has no brakes and the chain has been removed by my son for some purpose apparently connected with the activities of his youth club. I also have a tricycle, by the way, or rather my daughter has; but it is really a bit small for long-distance work.

3. I would gladly come by car if I could be assured that some arrangements could be made for parking. Last time there was an emergency of this kind the police directed me with such an excess of organizing zeal that I ended up three-quarters of a mile farther away from my office than I started.

4. Yes, I will give a lift in my car, if I use it, to anyone who cares to put in for one. I will not, however, (a) just run them up to the end of their street, (b) take them shopping at the week-end, (c) let their dog ride in the back, (d) take the kiddies to school, or (e) listen to an account of their experiences during the last bus strike, which I cannot believe were anything like as interesting as my own.

5. I am prepared to stay overnight at work as often as I am asked, provided that I am allowed some say in the choice of who stays with me, and also that a convincing account of my activities, prepared according to my own specification, is sent to my home address in sufficient time to forestall proceedings for divorce.

B. A. YOUNG



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2



3



4



"And where's reverse?"

The Autograph Book

By KENNETH GREGORY

Cricketers write their own characters

EACH year at this time I am reminded of Seook who apparently played for Surrey in 1936. That was the year I started to collect autographs of cricketers. Well, not exactly I, for my book was carried around the country by our county's kindly opening bat. I remember how indignant I was to find he had included the Cambridge side, but how was I to know that there were four future Test men, not to mention a supreme centre three-quarter, in that lot?

There is nothing like an autograph book to remind one of the Golden Age of cricket, that is to say the age which coincided with one's schooldays. The names inscribed are symbols of a time far removed both in space and years, and what is remarkable is that many recall by their loops and curves the mannerisms, the style and even the achievements of their owners on the field of play. Here is C. Washbrook,

ending his signature with a flourish as autocratic as his hook shot, and there . . . But this is the psychiatrist's problem. I saw the flowing hand of a young Yorkshire batsman as belonging to a gay adventurer ever willing to flirt with danger. I wonder, was L. Hutton really a Macartney at heart?

I turn to the Kent page where the only man to sign in pencil was F. E. Woolley. The last time I saw this *grand seigneur* he was bludgeoned by Arthur Wellard for five consecutive sixes. Yet he contrived to remain aloof, as well he might, for off the last ball of the over Wellard was missed on the boundary. True, the fieldsman was almost knocked flat as the ball descended on him, but I should like to have witnessed an over of unique attainments: 1-0-30-1.

My reactions to the autograph book have changed with the years. To a schoolboy scanning *Wisden* with far

greater distinction than Virgil, the All India team held few mysteries. To-day, after visiting their land, I can trace in their subtle characters the lure and mystery of the Orient. The last four letters of L. Amarnath suggest that this fine though temperamental player was a Sanskrit scholar, the way in which Mushtaq converted his Ali into an asterisk firing in all directions show why this brilliant stroke-maker so often ran himself out. At the bottom of the page is the careful, even old-maidish writing of M. Nissar, giant fast bowler of stupendous breakbacks. Did not Mr. Howard Marshall once say in a commentary "As Nissar runs up I can hear the ground tremble"?

Handwriting tells me 'everything about the nature of those pre-war tyrants, Yorkshire. With the exception of Hutton and W. E. Bowes, the latter's an insinuating hand, the whole team declared themselves business men who,



"If you get them to admit that they're second-class militarily they expect you to concede that morally and culturally they're tops."

whatever the state of their assets, do not intend their names to be associated with affectation. Two pages before Yorkshire are the sometimes gay, sometimes impassioned, or more often morally indifferent signatures of Cambridge; in that context N. W. D. Yardley is simply more boyish and less hieroglyphic than J. M. Brocklebank. Yet when he wrote a month later underneath A. Brian Sellers, H. Sutcliffe and A. Mitchell, Yardley had acquired letters twice their former size and more loosely joined. Perhaps this was Yorkshire's way of proclaiming their belief in divine right, for in that year, 1936, they were not champions.

Then there are the collector's pieces, the autographs which excite for their own intrinsic merit. A. Sandham, partner of Hobbs, boasted a neat, reactionary sloping script, one I associate with country clerics underpaid in this world but sufficiently well-versed in Jeremy Taylor to ensure themselves preferment in the next. As for R. W. V. Robins it is clear that the diminutive letters (clearly defined capitals followed by a slurred lower case) belong to one long practised in the arts of deception.

The man who once confused and bowled Bradman in a Test evolved his penmanship with the express purpose of stumping the Tripos examiners. Lastly the autograph in which I take the deepest pride, wholly masculine, totally devoid of flourish, complete in every way, so complete there was no need for the second initial—W. Hammond.

Any non-cricketer, given my autograph book, might hazard a shrewd guess at the pace and craft of the bowlers. The fast men generally signed with abandon, A. W. Wellard as far flung as the orchards of his adopted county, E. W. Clark fiercely determined to set four short legs whatever the powers might rule about leg theory, A. Gover a marvellous relaxation of energy recalling for me the predicament Miss Lynn Fontanne once found herself in when she paused as she signed and asked "Oh, dear! How many n's have I put in?" The slow left-handers wrote with calm precision, the off-spinners (T. W. Goddard is a gem) with amply curved flight, and the googly bowlers, it would seem, with difficulty. A. P. Freeman and T. B. Mitchell signed as if years of applied wrist and finger spin had made writing an extraneous art.

Lest you think I am a reactionary collector I must mention that last season's West Indies side have been added. Walcott's christian name will strike posterity as *illz de* (his hook shot translated into terms of forked lightning?), while that great player of seven years ago, Everton to his friends, is really *W u Ei* in the street directory. Weekes, alas, may have disappeared from our view, but we shall certainly hear more of G. Sobers of recent 365-not-out fame. The signature of Sobers, 1957, has much in common with D. Compton, 1937—unsophisticated and seemingly unaware of the fame to come.

When I have time to hunt through the contents of a cupboard I may find that war-time menu from Calcutta on which Flying Officer K. R. Miller scrawled something. And there is an hotel bill dating from the summer of 1956 with the name W. J. O'Reilly underneath the amount paid. The "Tiger" signed with gracious aplomb after I told him I recalled a certain 8 for 18.

"Should have been nine," he muttered.

I forbore to mention to him that one schoolboy had grudged him the eight he did obtain. And talking of schoolboys, the educationists should note that handwriting is not what it was before the war, many contemporary professionals tending to embrace illegibility. I really must consult *Wisden* and see who Seook, 1936, really was. A. Seook in the Golden Age . . . ?

Oyster Trade

ACROSS the wintry Midland plain we drove
Towards Northampton town; the treasure trove
We sought was oysters, but the merchant said
He'd none to offer. It was a chancy trade.
He instanced the long distance from the coast
And transport charges heavier than most.

So back we went, and turned along a lane
To Cosgrove, one small village in this plain.
Here archaeologists, with trowel and spade
Exposed a Roman villa; they'd displayed
A floor, the hypocaust and smoke-stained flues
That warmed the tiles beneath a Roman's shoes.
And—tribute to the transport of his day—
The oystershells some gourmet threw away.

HILDA BODEN

The Provincial Press

WHEN the man in the opposite corner folded his paper and placed it on the seat, took off his glasses and locked his fingers across his midriff, I coughed and said "Would you mind, sir, if I took a look . . .?" (I don't usually use "sir" to men of my own age-group—it makes them wonder about their looks and their years—but on this occasion I thought that some deference was due to that solid gold watch-chain, that handsome meer-schaum and that impeccable broadcloth.

He looked up and smiled. "Certainly," he said, "but I doubt whether you'll be interested." He handed me his paper and I opened it out. It was unfamiliar, almost foreign-looking. It was called the something or other *Echo* (*Gazette*, *Chronicle*, *Argus*, or *Advertiser*: I forget).

"Oh," I said, "I didn't know it was a provincial."

"Look at page eight," he said.

Page eight contained a dozen photographs of wedding groups. I read the captions carefully, wondering what I was expected to find interesting.

"I'm afraid I don't know any of them," I said.

"Nor do I," said sir, "but don't they look happy? You don't get that sort of thing in the London papers, you know. Nothing but miserable divorces and ugly rumours. You say you don't know these happy couples, but do you know the unhappy people featured daily in the popular press, the fugitive starlets, graceless duchesses and so on?"

"No, I suppose not," I said.

"Provincial papers deal with *real* people," he said, "with births, marriages, deaths, local history and politics, education, drama, voluntary democratic organizations, sport . . . Are you interested in sport? Look at page twelve."

Page twelve contained a mass of detail about local football and cricket. I observed that a team called Hounslow Recreation had headed the Intermediate League, with twenty-eight points ("two points deducted for playing an ineligible man") from seventeen games.

"I've never watched much football," he said, "but I like to know what's going on."

"Me too," I said. "I read about the Wolves, Manchester United, Sunderland, and so on, but that's about all."

"If you read this paper you'd soon know about Hounslow Recreation, Retchford Synthetic and the Rose and Crown 'A.' What's the difference?"

"I see what you mean," I said, "but surely you'll admit that the London morning papers provide a better coverage of important world news."

"H-bombs, d'you mean? The cold war, big crime stories, sex, stunts? You can keep 'em all. Every week in this paper there's a reasoned leading article—short, mark you—and it's all I need to keep in touch."

"But the London dailies are so entertaining, the comic strips and so on."

"The other day," said sir, "I read in this paper an account of a funeral. It said, and I quote, 'among the mourners were Tom Peabody, Harry Starr, Wilfred Micklewright (who scored a

hat-trick against Exton Reserves on Saturday), Alfred Wright . . .' If you can find better humour than that in the London papers show it to me."

I laughed.

"Or, quote, 'The sermon was preached by the vicar, the Rev. A. E. Toppam, his subject being Vestry Virgins.'"

"Not bad," I said.

"Or, quote, 'Mrs. Andrew Gilson-Brown's garden party was unfortunately marred by heavy rain and the fatal seizure (see page one) of Captain Rednose.'"

"H'm," I said.

"Or—but need I go on all day?"

"Your close knowledge of the provincial press, sir," I said, "suggests that you were once intimately connected with it. An editor, perhaps?"

"No such luck. It was my misfortune to spend most of my working life in Fleet Street. Young man," he said, getting even with me at last for that "sir," "you are speaking to a former editor of the *Daily* —"

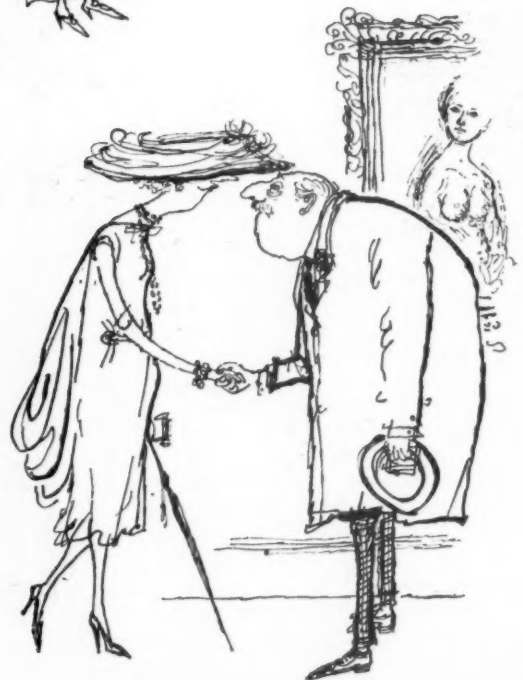
BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



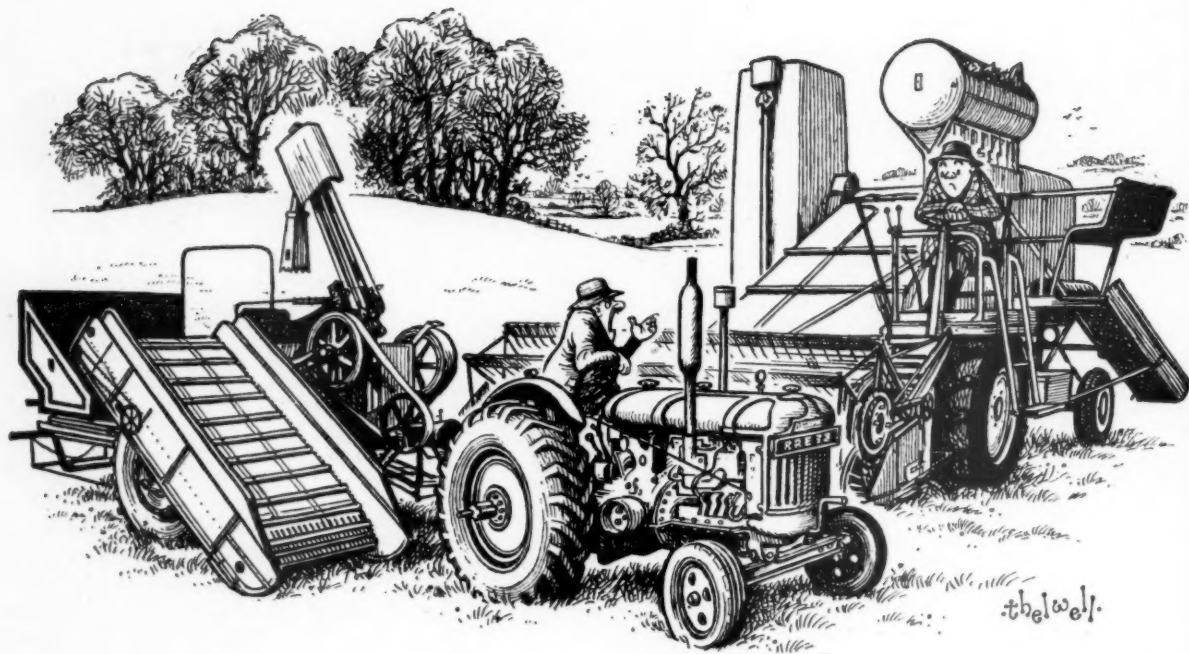


PRIVATE VIEW

Ronald
Searle
at the
Academy







"My wife's just the same. Now she wants a spin-drier."

Grandpa Elijah

By JONQUIL ANTONY

AT the age of eighty my grandfather took an extreme dislike to Grandma Moses—whom he had never met.

"What a fuss!" my grandfather was always saying. "A lot of balderdash and poppycock! Ten to one the woman traces the pictures!"

His anger and disgust carried him to such lengths that one day he announced that he himself had decided to write a book.

"Too much of this senile stuff going on round me," he said. "What do you take me for, all of you? If I was an old dog you'd be having me put down! Anyway, I'm not smelly, and that's something, isn't it?"

My grandfather was extremely secretive about his book. When asked about its contents he would reply vaguely that it concerned "his travels." This we believed, for as a young man he had apparently covered a great many miles of land and sea—or so he always told us.

His travels have culminated in his

collection. My grandfather's collection adorns his bedroom—both walls and furniture. Many boomerangs, assegais, arrows and tomahawks hang round his bed, and he also owns snickersnees, yataghans and kukris in large numbers. His bed is hung with beadwork—fancy embroidery done by women of a cannibal tribe, and his most prized possession is his bedside lampshade, which is made from the skin of the back of a missionary who had mistakenly attempted to convert this same tribe. There are also a great many tusks in the room, and a number of moth-eaten animals' heads. These, he agrees, have now seen their best days, but he likes to keep them as they remind him of his daughters.

How far my grandfather really travelled, and where to, is something of a mystery. Indeed my mother insists that several of the items in his collection were purchased by him in a junk shop kept by a friend of his in Torquay (though not, perhaps, the piece of the missionary's back).

We were surprised at the speed with which my grandfather found a publisher for his book. "Son of old Fats, you know," he told us. "You remember Fats? Heard me speak of him? He was at 'Arrow with me . . . son runs the publishing business now." My grandfather always says 'Arrow, firmly maintaining that this is the correct pronunciation, as in 'umour, 'erbs and 'otel.

The family was even more surprised when the son of old Fats took up my grandfather's book in a big way and prepared to publish it in a remarkably short time.

"Says he's put it at the top of the autumn list," my grandfather remarked nonchalantly. "Thinks it'll sell, so I understand. Says it's racy and it'll make 'em sit up."

"Make who sit up?" inquired my mother anxiously.

"The parasites," replied my grandfather. "Library readers—ticks and swabs, all of them. Never read a decent bit of literature in their lives."

Persistently, he still clings to the belief that his readers are ticks and parasites, for, astonishingly, my grandfather has now become what is known as "a best seller." His first book, entitled sweepingly *India*, was followed in rapid succession by *Japan*, *Africa*, *Russia* and *Egypt*. The parasites certainly lap it up.

"No stupid information in my books to fog their tiny brains," says my grandfather. "Just simple British stuff—about my travels—spiced up here and there, of course . . ." So now, triumphant over Grandma Moses, he finds himself, at the age of eighty-four, leading the life of a busy and successful author. The secret of his books lies in his style—my grandfather could make something racy out of a week in Pimlico.

Shortly after the success of *India*, when he was half-way through *Japan* he decided he would now require a secretary. He types rapidly himself, but he proclaimed that in future he would dictate. There were also dozens of useful little things a secretary could do for him, such as dusting the tusks.

"Remember old Malpas that was at 'Arrow with me?' he asked my father.

"I'm taking on his girl. It seems she needs a job, so she's coming along to-morrow."

Old Malpas's girl—nearing sixty—gave a total impression of sand. She had sandy eyelashes and sandy hair (she was quite proud that it had kept its colour) and she wore sandy skirts and sandy jumpers. On her bosom she wore a large brooch which was, without question, a whole tablespoonful of sand set in gold.

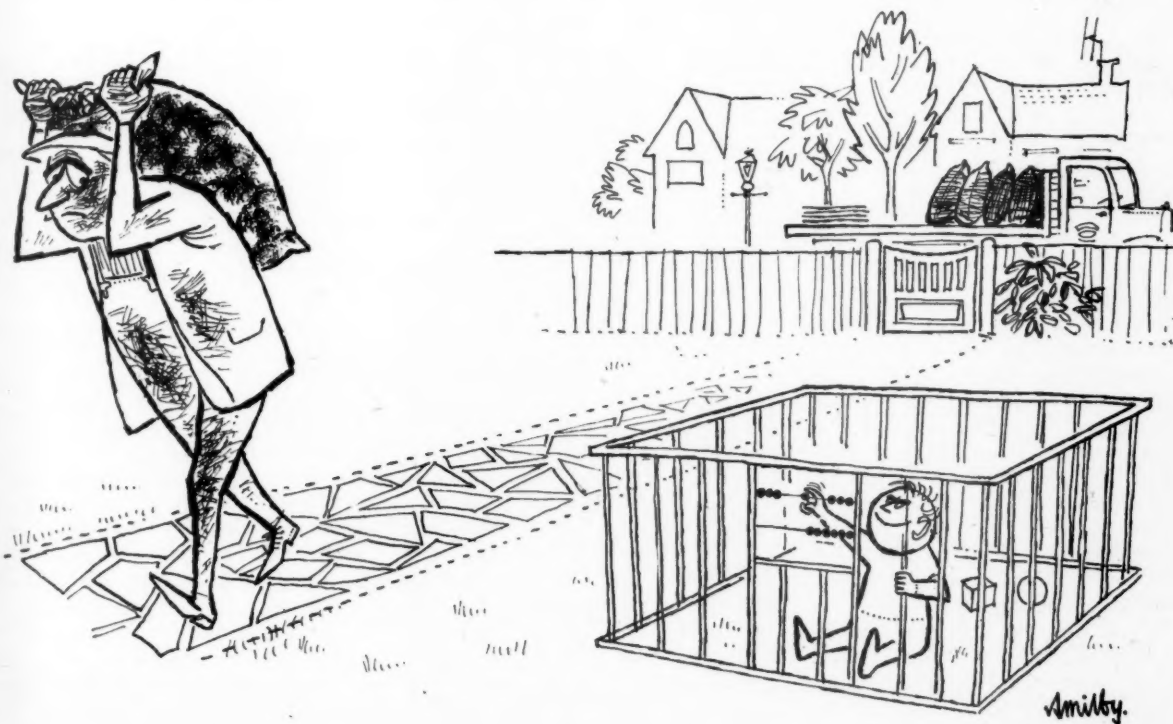
From the start we realized that Miss Malpas would not do for my grandfather. He upset her at once by addressing her loudly and pointedly as "*Miss Mall-pass*." She swallowed hard and said in a squeaky voice "You will excuse me, I am sure, but it is *Mau-pas*. We are of French extraction, you know . . ."

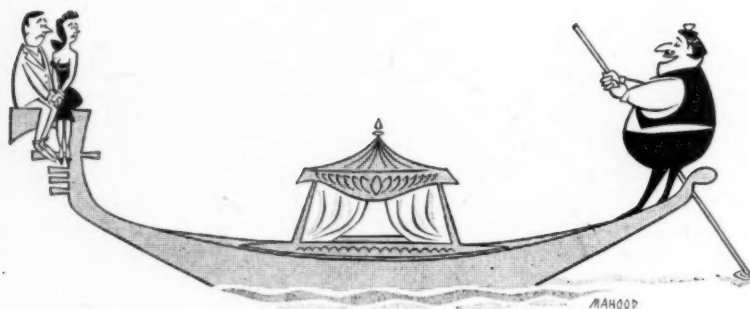
"Nonsense!" cried my grandfather. "Of course it's not *Mau-pas*! It's *Mall-pass*! I've always called your father that, and after all I've known him a great deal longer than you have!"

Miss Malpas was totally unable to understand my grandfather. There was also the matter of the book. Quite soon after she began work for him Miss Malpas realized with horror that my

grandfather had never in his life visited Japan. His book was one gigantic lie—except for the bits out of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. This discovery shook Miss Malpas very much indeed. But she was even more distressed by what she called "the passages about the naughty ladies." My grandfather's fertile imagination had been quite carried away by his tales of the geisha girls. One day, indeed, Miss Malpas crept out to the kitchen and asked my mother, in a low voice, if she would mind taking down the next part. She herself would pretend, she said, that she had to go out to post a letter. It was not what my grandfather was going to put in the book—but it was what he said between dictating the paragraphs.

My mother spoke earnestly to him about this. She explained that perhaps Miss Malpas did not quite understand some of the things he said. He nodded and then replied that he was in any case going to cease dictating to her. Each time she bent over her pad there was a drop on the end of her nose, and this, he found, made him lack concentration. "Have to have a bet with myself as to how long it'll be before it





slides," he said. "Anyway, too much like Alaska," he added vaguely. But he was sorry for the poor creature—it was perfectly plain that old Malpas had not provided for her—so he would not dismiss her. He would arrange for her to do other work—such as dusting the tusks.

For about a week things went along on an even keel—and then the climax came. My mother was bottling plums when Miss Malpas entered to her hurriedly, and quite wildly. Wisps of her sandy hair hung round her face, and she clutched at her sand brooch at the neck of her sand jumper. With tears and gesticulations she explained that she must leave at once. It was the old gentleman . . . she had expected him to be such a dear old gentleman . . . but this—this was *horrible! Horrible!*

My mother was appalled. Remembering the naughty ladies—of whom there had been a great number in my grandfather's life—she turned quite pale.

"Surely . . . you don't mean . . . he—*he didn't . . . ?*" My mother's voice trailed away in dread.

"Oh, no, no, *no!*" cried Miss Malpas, equally shocked by the thought. "Of course not . . . It's just that—it was something—he asked me to *do!*" She swallowed hard. "It is best that I go. We—we are *temperamentally unsuited.*"

Miss Malpas prepared to leave the house for ever. But before she went my mother insisted on knowing just what it was that Miss Malpas had been asked to do. "You *must* tell me the truth," she said. Shuddering, Miss Malpas replied "He asked me to sponge the missionary's back"—and at that she burst into tears and ran away down the front steps.

My grandfather was rather casual about the whole thing. "Simply asked her to sponge the dust off the lampshade," he said. "Had to think of little things for her to do. A lot of fuss about

nothing! Now if the missionary was *alive* it'd have been a different thing—I don't suppose she's ever washed down a man's back." He pointed an accusing finger at my mother. "You should have seen from the start that she wouldn't do," he said. "Or told me to get rid of her that time she came into the kitchen. I know what went on.

Telling me she didn't understand the things I said. Of course she understood. Trouble with that woman is that she isn't healthy-minded."

"Well," my mother replied feebly, "she's gone. Now I suppose we shall have to find you another secretary."

"I don't want one," said my grandfather. "I can manage far better on my own. And you can dust the tusks and do the missionary's back, can't you?" His face brightened considerably. "I'll tell you what you *can* find me."

"What?" asked my mother in a dead voice.

"You can find me a Lapp," said my grandfather. "Next thing I've decided on for the parasites is Lapland—and I've never been there."

After a great deal of trouble we found him a Lapp—but that is another story.

Daydreams

By CLAUD COCKBURN

Problems that Face the Lucky Winner

I WOULD like just to check up on how we are all doing with our daydreams. With my own, quite frankly, I am having a little trouble.

Possibly it runs in the family. I had an uncle who had daydream trouble too.

Up to a point he had the right daydream spirit, shown in its highest form, I always think, by a citizen of Kiev, Russia, whom playwright Chekov wrote about. This idealist based his way of life on the assumption that he was going to win the Town Lottery—not just once, but twice in a row, because one win would not produce enough to pay his debts.

And if you come to think of it, twice £75,000 on the Pools would make a handier sum than just £75,000.

My uncle—his name, if you stickle for it, was Philip Stevenson—took a number of tickets every year in the Calcutta Sweep, equivalent in those days of the Irish Hospitals Sweep now. Every year he knew he was going to win.

It wasn't getting the money that worried him, it was the gunroom; the gunroom, that is, of the shooting lodge he was going to build in Scotland to go to at the proper seasons when he was not residing at the house he was going to buy in Mayfair. When I was a boy I had to hold his walking-stick upright

on the lawn of his (strictly temporary, of course) villa in an outer suburb while he paced off distances from it—the measurements of the gunroom-in-the-sky. He never could get them just right. "No go," he would mutter. "Not room to swing a cat." Or else, "I don't want a gunroom the size of a barn, do I!" he would yell at me, as though I was a chiselling architect.

Austere people tell us that daydreams lead to escapism, flabbiness, and avoidance of awkward realities. I can only say I wish mine did. Instead they put a terrible strain on my thinking, and I believe millions of others are in the same boat.

For instance, I make this enormous killing—Pools, or the Sweep, or they buy for untold gold the film-rights of two smash-hit plays I write. So far, so good. That's the easy part. Then I buy this dream-castle in sunny Spain. Wonderful climate, of course, with superb private beach, all amenities and only five hours from London in my private plane. In fact a travel-folder all of my own.

But (face facts) places where they have sun all the time and no rain have poor pasturage—hence cow-shortage. And the super-engine of our dream car has hardly stopped purring on the

terrace with its breath-taking view of sea and mountains when my wife says "I suppose we can get all the milk we want for the children from the farm. Are they T.B. tested?"

I have to tell her about the rain and the cows, and I remember a piece I once read about how goats' milk is healthier. But she's not convinced.

Probably it will save trouble and strife to say "No" to that particular big killing and accept an invitation to the peerage. They reform the House of Lords and they want to make Life Peers, selected from citizens who will bring new prestige and lustre to the Upper House, raise its tone. So I join, and my maiden speech is reported on the front page of every newspaper, and all the principal leading articles are devoted to praising it. It is "refreshing," "thought-provoking," "epoch-making," and "to be ignored at our peril."

I follow it up with something similar, and the Prime Minister asks me to join the Cabinet. Do I or don't I? I refuse, and people start saying I can criticize but I'm scared of responsibility. Or I accept, and a month later some inept colleague raises income tax or unemployment or something, and the Government is thrown out on its ear, unfairly involving me in its collapse.

The effort of making a decision is turning my hair grey. Hardly worth all the anxiety.

It may be simpler to carry on inventing this "super-eavesdrop" device I have in mind. We all know—or we certainly ought to if we have any regard for our privacy—that apart from various ingenious types of wire-tapping much used by business competitors in the United States, there are always devices which enable you to secrete a gadget the size of a golf-ball in somebody's office or boudoir, and then—without any fussing with wires—you install another gadget anything up to a mile away, which neatly tape-records for your private information everything that goes on.

Still, even with the wondrous advance of modern technique, it still seems to me that there's a lot of embarrassing drudgery involved.

"What's that you're putting in the drawer of my desk, old man? Looks like a golf-ball."

"Yes, doesn't it. Awfully like."

"Well, will you kindly explain to my

satisfaction, old man, why the devil you are putting something that looks 'awfully like a golf-ball' into my desk?"

Awkward.

My dream gadget is the size of a sixpence, and you don't need to plant it anywhere, you just wear it under your lapel. By simply adjusting its wavelength in a certain way you can tune in to any conversation anywhere within fifty miles. But again there are snags.

For instance, I pick up on my gadget a very strictly private—that's what they think—conversation between A and B about a little business venture.

The whole scheme, as played over on my tape-recorder, sounds like dangerous rot to me. In a spirit of pure good will, I say to A later "If I were you I wouldn't waste much time on that project you and B have in mind. I mean, just to take one point . . ."

Before I'm half finished he's looking

at me askance—and probably searching his office for golf-balls too.

Pretty soon I'm afraid I shan't dare talk to anyone for fear of letting on that I know what they're up to. Think of the awful strain of it.

Jones, a snake in the grass if ever I saw one, has the nerve to assume bonhomie and he says "Hullo, old man. Too long time no sec. Talking about you in the club only yesterday."

Yes indeed, and I know what you were saying about me, too, you rat. But that might give my gadget away and I have to be civil to this low, spiteful, gossiping old scandal-monger.

I know I ought to get to grips with all these daydream problems and tackle them in a practical manner. Friends tell me it's no use running away from them. But I can't help it.

Willy-nilly, I slip back into the simple little business of ordinary real life.

I'm an escapist from my daydreams.

CHESTNUT GROVE

Speaking at the Royal Academy banquet, Sir Kenneth Clark said "It is astonishing how quickly an artist's work can disappear. Where are all the drawings that George Belcher used to turn out week after week? I have never seen one exhibited, and yet they contain passages of drawing worthy of the old masters."



"'E GIVES ME THIS ENVELOPE AND SEZ, 'THIS IS A QUID PRO QUO,' 'E SEZ. WHEN I OPENS IT, THERE WAS ONLY TEN BOB."

July 1 1936

Toby Competitions

No. 15—First Person Singular

COMPETITORS are invited to submit an extract, in not more than one hundred and fifty words, from the imaginary autobiography of one of the well-known people, of any nationality and from any walk of life, who have persistently made the headlines during the past few years.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, May 16, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 15, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 12 (Sincerest Form)

Parodies of contemporary *Punch* writers were asked for here, but a good many of the entries received could more accurately be described as pieces of pastiche. Too many competitors were content merely to imitate a style (often with commendable accuracy), overlooking the fact that an essential ingredient of parody is ridicule. All too often, where we looked for a devastating skit on some manner or characteristic of writing, we found mere slavish forgery. This was sometimes amusing, but it was not enough.

One interesting point to emerge was

that the largest proportion of competitors devoted their attention to the work of Richard Mallett—who is, of course, himself one of the most accomplished of living parodists.

The prize was awarded to:

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS
74 HARLYN DRIVE
NORTHWOOD HILLS
PINNER
MIDDLESEX

for the following parody of Anthony Carson:

I Miss My Swiss

We got to Montreux at five in the morning. It was pouring. The mountains were dirty wet cotton wool. "I didn't know it rained on the Riviera," said a stout hairdresser from Bolton. "We get to Nice on Friday," I said. "This is Switzerland. My party, please form a group on the platform." Thirty-seven people crawled shivering from the train. "Should be thirty-eight," I said, numbering them off. "Mrs. Crumple went to the toilet at Lausanne," said a voice. "I've not seen her since." "Was that the place with 'Libre' on the door?" somebody whispered. "I thought that was a travelling library." "Wait here," I ordered. "I'll get taxi." Outside in the downpour stood a Poly girl I knew. "I'm meeting a party from Welwyn," she said. "Stout party?" I said. We both laughed. Suddenly she started to cry. "Come and have a drink," I said.

Among the Richard Malletts, the following entry from C. H. Bailey, 29 Leicester Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire was a near miss (although Mallett would certainly not have used the word "talents"):

At the Pictures

The Black Cat. The best film of this week's six is undoubtedly *Le Chat Noir* or *The Black Cat* (Director: Albert Ritter) which I found quite delightful. The film has a documentary style, but there is genuine suspense, I assure you. Excellent detail abounds throughout in scene (the chipped saucer of milk on the black-and-red kitchen tiles) and playing (the hint of fear the cat shows as its rivals appear). There is no room to describe the film properly; I have not mentioned André Lavent's charming and apposite music (slinky with accompaniment of flutes); however I hope I've indicated some of this film's talents to feline enthusiasts.

Survey

After 16 weeks I'm still asked if *Woman of War* (16/5/58) is tense, and I repeat it is, fairly. *Odyssean Journey* (4/7/58) is visually empty but otherwise brilliant. Most notable release: *Journey's End* (27/8/58) with an all female cast.

Another near miss, from James Bayley, Gooseham Mill, Morwenstow, North Cornwall:

Survey

(Dates in brackets do not necessarily refer to *Punch* reviews.)

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Tommy Steele in the musical version of *Brighton Rock* (3/2/57) continues to amuse and delight those who have never heard of Graham Greene; *Strange Harpoonings*, a whaling psychological romance, was not liked by any other critic so perhaps it should be seen—I may try it next week. You can still catch the impressive little eight-minute Swahili film, *Agama Dorcas* (17/3/58), if you hurry out to the Anywoman Cinema at Cricklewood. *The Life of Helen Galligaskins* on indiscriminate release is, I am told, notable for its "gorgeous movie music"—whatever that may mean.

Another quotable dig at Mallett occurred in the entry from L. Hellman, 66 Valley Drive, Kingsbury, N.W.9:

I am determined to put in a good word for *Danny Dooney*, a British comedy which in spite of being dull, badly acted and directed, corny and mostly unfunny is nevertheless extremely unpretentious.

David Hebden, 36 Clanricarde Gardens, London, W.2, took a healthy swipe at Alex Atkinson in his Mayhew role, as follows:

The New Mayhew—A Depth Plumber

I came upon him in a house of refreshment whither, he informed me, he was accustomed to go in search of nourishment and of subjects for his writings. His purpose, as he explained it, was to present studies of contemporary persons in a manner calculated to arouse the interest and humour of his readers. He was not aware of any tendency on his part to pick upon less favoured or less fortunate beings than himself, nor saw any harm in exposing their misfortunes for his own gain. Indeed, he appeared less concerned by the unhappiness he encountered in his researches than by a rumour that his writings would no longer appear in the journal for which they were prepared. However, his belief in the veracity of this report in no way appeared to affect his capacity for taking refreshment.

To all those mentioned above, a Toby bookmark; and to the following: Bernard Balkin, 8, Hill Rise, Greenford, Middlesex; Oliver Coburn, Meads, Frithesden Copse, Berkhamstead, Herts; Henry Conlin, 31, Wayman Street, Sunderland; P. J. Darley, Bos Kernow, Liphook, Hants.; Richard Howell, Bassett Hotel, Barry, Glam.; A. J. Lane, Portland Breakwater Lighthouse, c/o A.Q.H.M., H.M. Naval Base, Portland, Dorset; Alan Nelhams, 29, North End Road, Golders Green, London, N.W.11; Norman Page, 297 Whitehorse Lane, London, S.E.25; A. H. Tongue, Allington, Aldenham Avenue, Radlett, Herts.; F. H. Townshend-Rose, 111, Thornbury Road, Osterley, Middlesex; and P. J. Wagner, Little Whapplegate, Hayes Lane, Slinfold, Sussex.

"Shakespeare's 'Much Ado About Nothing,' co-starring Katharine Hepburn and Alfred Drake, opens at Detroit's Riviera Theatre tonight for a two-week run. The setting is the Texas-Mexico border." *The Windsor Daily Star* (Ontario)

These adaptors . . .





BOOKING OFFICE

General Buona-Parté

Napoleon in his Time. Jean Savant.
Translated from the French by Katherine
John. Putnam, 30/-

I REMEMBER lunching with a French officer in the now defunct Junior United Service Club, where a bust of Napoleon used to stand on the half-landing. As we came up the stairs he dryly remarked "You will not find a statue of Wellington in any of the military clubs of my country," adding, "that man and his nephew were the ruin of France."

It must be admitted that, certainly during the nineteenth century, English sentimentality about Bonaparte often took a particularly ludicrous form. He might reasonably be regarded as the subject of marvel on account of his absolute disregard for all moral feeling and humanity, or for his consistent egocentricity and pursuit of power for its own sake. Indeed his will and consistency make him one of the most remarkable men who ever lived. He was always true to form. But to suppose that he was bent on creating a better world, interested in justice or the common man, devoted to the arts and sciences, or indeed bore any resemblance to the picture of him so dear to the near-quisling British Whigs of his own time is to make a very big mistake.

Anyone who still doubts this should read M. Jean Savant's enthralling book, which takes Bonaparte from schooldays to death entirely from *contemporary* accounts. Only a brief note is given regarding each writer and chronological circumstance. The result is extraordinarily successful, sometimes even uproariously funny, so vividly does Napoleon come to life, seen from a thousand different angles.

His personal habits were abominable, from drinking his coffee out of the saucer, to having an unsuitable relationship with his sisters and stepdaughter. He cheated at all games, and after dinner would collect the napkins and

table cloth, in which he would dress up and give long and wearisome imitations. If he heard anyone open a snuff-box in the council of state he would send an usher to bring it to him, use the snuff, and then throw the box in a drawer whence the owner never recovered it. When reflecting, he would take a pen-knife from his pocket and (using it only for this purpose) jab it continually into the arm of his chair.

Nothing was too large or too small to avoid the impact of his pathological egotism. The remarkable thing is how often men who had everything to lose by their integrity stood up to him, e.g. Admiral Bruix, who refused point-blank to order his ships into open sea for review when a storm impended, with

disastrous results to his own career; or the unnamed notary (obviously a splendidly "logical" French figure) who had registered Lucien Bonaparte's marriage to the widow of a Paris stockbroker, when his brother had plans for some much more ambitious union.

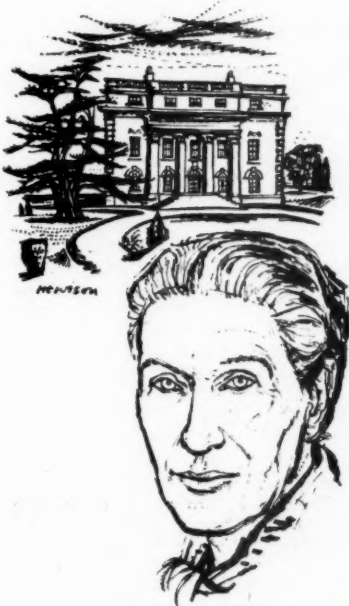
The rest of the Bonapartes were on the whole far from being nonentities, and the rows, intrigues and general vulgarity of their family life make enormously comic reading. The line the Bonaparte family took was that Napoleon had "done" his eldest brother, Joseph, out of his patrimony by becoming Emperor himself—when he was really only the fourth son.

Intensely envious of his own commanders, none of whom he would willingly praise, Bonaparte always preferred to have a third party present if he were going to blackguard a subordinate. This habit, his love of teasing, and his offensive manners suggest an innate sadism. For example, Josephine had a great fear of driving fast. He therefore forced her, when suffering from one of her habitual migraines, to sit in a chaise (subsequently wrecked by the impact) and drive at full gallop over a deep gully.

All this private behaviour was, of course, reflected in his public life, from the murder of the Duke d'Enghien to the invasion of Spain, and the imprisonment of the Pope to his method of distributing awards to his army. He was heartless, petty and common, and there seems no reason whatever to suppose that if he had imposed his sway over Europe the result would have been in the least beneficial.

However, where dictatorship is concerned such failings count not at all with people who wish for dictators. Just as Hitler or Stalin were credited with superhuman gifts, it was alleged in his own time that Bonaparte had invented double-entry bookkeeping. It is the Will people who like dictators want; the Legend can be supplied later. "My mistress is power," said Bonaparte. M. Savant, Chancellor of *l'Académie d'Histoire* and author of

NOVEL FACES



XV—ELIZABETH BOWEN

*On innocence betrayed she casts her eye
And love, beneath an Anglo-Irish sky.*

more than twenty books about Napoleon, has composed a volume of the greatest interest, showing the history of this, his only passionate love, and the one to which he was always faithful.

ANTHONY POWELL

Balthazar. Lawrence Durrell. *Faber*, 15/-

"In the Space and Time marriage," says Mr. Durrell, "we have the greatest Boy-meets-Girl story of the age"; and this extremely interesting novel, the second of a whole group to be based on *Justine*, disregards chronology in going back to re-examine the facts and emotions of the earlier book. The hero, who writes in the first person, has left Alexandria to recover himself as a hermit, and is visited by the knowing Balthazar with a sheaf of notes torpedoing many of his former assumptions. Justine, for instance, had used him merely as a cover for her affair with Purswarden.

Although *Balthazar* is designed to stand on its own, readers of *Justine* will get a fuller flavour, for the experiment of superimposing one novel critically upon another is fascinating, and the story advances while it fills out. Mr. Durrell's prose is sometimes over-coloured, and he has an irking passion for the word "great"; but he writes of love as a poet, wittily and with very adult perception.

E.O.D.K.

To Bed on Thursday. Anthony Brode. *Elek*, 15/-

This amiable successor to *Picture a Country Vicarage* describes life as a cub reporter on a small local paper in a wealthy dormitory area during the war. The very casual proprietor and the very precise editor make the novice's life harassingly variegated. It seems to have been a fairly efficient local paper and Mr. Brode was, in some respects, rather lucky. Fêtes, brushes with the Canadian Army, a village pageant, may sound rather small beer; but the gaiety and clarity of the writing lift the book well

above the usual cold and congealing humours of bygone local life. There is a splendid account of a council meeting at which a member was ruled out of order and sat down grumbling "I'm not a ruddy clockwork mouse."

Mr. Brode keeps his sense of history unobtrusively in the background, but he has one. The collection of sketches throws light on English society from many angles and the final effect is much more solid than one might expect. This is comedy, not farce.

R. G. G. P.

The Once and Future King. T. H. White. *Collins*, 25/-

Mr. White's *King Arthur Omnibus*, so to speak. For consistency the story is transposed to the Middle Ages and our historical kings, Plantagenets and so on, treated as legendary; this lets Mr. White have the best of both worlds but is irritating. *The Sword in the Stone*, which is about Merlin's education of Arthur, is one of the best children's books I know, even if some of the funny bits are rather much for parents; here it has been altered a little (for the worse, I think, but not disastrously) in order to fit in with the rest of the scheme. The other three books recount Arthur's attempts to replace force with justice; inevitably they have something of the messiness of the original story and are supported by a slightly headmasterly ethic. But Mr. White's feeling for what things are like, or would be like (how it feels to fight in heavy armour, for instance, or to be an owl), makes even the unsatisfactory parts interesting. There is very little tushery, a bit of facetiousness and some good, savage remarks about the Celt.

P. D.

Flash and Filigree. Terry Southern. *Deutsch*, 12/6

Mr. Southern is unusual among younger American novelists in that his formative influences appear to be not Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, or any of their contemporaries, but Wyndham Lewis and Henry Green (who has himself praised this first novel highly). The latter influence is particularly discernible in the elaborately inconsequent dialogues between Nurses Thorne and Jackson, and a long irrelevant flashback whose bravura passages read like a parody of *Loving*. On the other hand, this comic phantasmagoria of an eminent dermatologist haunted by a malicious psychopath (who first claims to have cured an infected ulcer by packing it with cancer culture and later turns up for another consultation disguised as a woman, at which the doctor murders him), contains some excellent characterizations, and one enormously funny scene, when the doctor and a private detective—both drunk and drugged—attend a TV Quiz Show called "What's My Disease?" (Ailments include Multiple-Goitre and Giant Measle.) Some readers in this country—where the type is mercifully less prevalent—may find

the egregious Babs, a sort of urban Baby Doll, less amusing and poignant than the author evidently imagines, but the doctor himself is a universal figure whom all will enjoy.

J. M-R.

Against the Wind. Geoffrey Household. *Michael Joseph*, 21/-

His autobiography is so packed with variety that it fully explains Mr. Household's liking for the exotic. From Oxford he went to a bank in Bucharest, where he learned the most civilized routes to the fleshpots; a long spell followed selling bananas in France and Spain; after an interlude in America, writing for children, he became a continental salesman in ink until the war. Four days from its declaration he was on his way to Ploesti in an abortive attempt to blow up the oil wells, and he then led a Field Security Section in Greece and all over the Middle East. Twice married. A full life, unashamedly enjoyed by a conscious hedonist.

The enjoyment is passed on, coolly and often amusingly. If the early Mr. Household seems a little pleased with himself, in particular over his amorous successes, the later one is modest about an unusually interesting war and his achievements as a writer.

E. O. D. K.

Threepenny Novel. Bertholt Brecht. *Hanison*, 21/-

The provenance of this book is complex and rather depressing: *The Beggar's Opera*, trad. arr. Gay, was first performed in 1728; exactly two hundred years later Bertholt Brecht produced his *Dreigroschenoper*, inspired by a German adaptation of the English libretto. This popular work has twice been filmed, and was recently revived, in an up-to-date form, in London. Now comes a "novelized" version which—despite the blurb's disclaimer—is scarcely more than a rehash of libretto and film-script. The story of MacHeath and Polly Peachum is thus reintroduced, at several removes and in an almost totally unrecognizable form, to an English public which has, presumably, forgotten the native original; it only remains for the novel to be re-dramatized, re-set by Racine Fricker and presented as an operatic novelty to television audiences. In itself the book is a shoddy, jejune piece of work, written with that peculiarly heavy-handed Teutonic irony which becomes doubly embarrassing in translation. The London setting has by now become as *Kitsch* as the Japan of Gilbert's *Mikado*: MacHeath, for example, regales himself, in



"Dad—quick!"

Budget Price Changes

Some of the advertisements in this issue of *Punch* were printed before the Budget, which may have affected the prices quoted. You should make sure from your retailer or from the advertiser direct what is the present correct price.

a London pub, on sheep's liver with oil and vinegar. Brecht, one imagines, dashed off the book as a pot-boiler; and one cannot help feeling that in its original form the opera owed less to Brecht's libretto than to the haunting music of Kurt Weill.

J. B.

On Modern Art. Salvador Dali. *Vision Press*, 40/-

Salvador Dali might almost be described as the Gilbert Harding of the world of international art, at least inasmuch as it is difficult to get away from him for long, or from his moustache. Here we have his views both in English and French, the latter printed on green paper and translated by Mr. Haakon M. Chevalier. We are offered nothing startlingly original, except M. Dali's frank admission that he likes making money: "The simplest way of refusing any concession to gold is to have some oneself." Few will be found in disagreement. He thinks Turner the worst painter in the world, but is quite keen on Bouguereau; and, however little one may share the latter taste, it must be agreed that the Picasso drawing he chooses to face Bouguereau's *Birth of Venus* is not the Master at his happiest. Even though he used to make George Orwell so cross, it would be a dull world if all the people like M. Dali were suppressed or went permanently to Hollywood.

A. P.

Bid the Soldiers Shoot. John Lodwick. *Heinemann*, 18/-

This is an account of the sixteen prisons Mr. Lodwick stayed in during the war. To avoid producing the kind of military autobiography he dislikes he omits any direct description of much of his experience but refers to it in baffling asides. He has even invented a literary device that might be called "the partial forward flashback," which ought to get him blackballed from Parnassus. Sometimes he seems to be defending a point of view, though it is never clear what.

Parts of the book, in fact, show him at his uneasy worst; but in most of it he is at his exciting, entertaining and moving best. The growing number of admirers of his novels will be interested to meet some of the material in its unprocessed state. Whether he is a Foreign Legionary or a sabotage expert or a Commando or a Chetnik-by-adoption he meets adventures and adventurers and, on the whole, he describes them as well as any man now writing.

R. G. G. P.

AT THE PLAY

My Fair Lady (DRURY LANE)
Something to Hide (ST. MARTIN'S)
Quaint Honour—(ARTS)

IT must be safe to say not merely that no musical, but also no play of any kind, has ever been received in London with such fabulous anticipation as *My Fair Lady*. In a way, it is coming



[My Fair Lady]

Alfred P. Doolittle—STANLEY HOLLOWAY

Henry Higgins—REX HARRISON

Eliza Doolittle—JULIE ANDREWS

home. For years, it seems, every in-bound suitcase from New York must have carried for domestic consumption at least one copy of the record, but the sponsors need have no fear that the British ear is sated, for both lyrics and music (Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe) are of such quality that they will stand a great deal of repetition. Indeed it is an added pleasure to welcome them as old friends. Hearing the record it was impossible to imagine the appearance of the production, and one of the excitements now is to see how smoothly the story has been adapted in a happy alternation between the domesticity of Wimpole Street and grand spectacle. Although so much of his dialogue has been ingeniously absorbed, it is only, of course, near-Shaw; but only the craggiest Shavians can possibly object to a romantic slant so crisp and civilized that even at the end Higgins' bachelor joys finally go overboard with no larger splash than a quietly spoken "Where the devil are my slippers, Eliza?" Surely this must be the first musical to deny its hero and heroine a kiss.

My Fair Lady has the chorus-voltage of *Oklahoma!* plus a much more adult wit. It is so gloriously certain of itself that it can afford to combine gentleness with clash of class, and social satire with neat high spirits. Thanks to Cecil Beaton, the satire is carried deliciously into dresses that reach perfect parody in the black-and-white Ascot scene where

debs stand paralysed with boredom at the awful dullness of the horse; he gives a magnificent whirl of colour to the dancing costers in Covent Garden. Technically Moss Hart's production is a marvel, so cleverly are the two revolving stages used to change wide scenic effects with a minimum of fuss; effects arranged by Oliver Smith with a success failing only at the opening of the ball in a set flimsy and poor by comparison. But the joint understanding of an exceptional team is nowhere better illustrated than in the way the dialogue melts naturally into the lyrics, without any of the jerks and manoeuvres as of the departure of an overloaded bus, that are often a blemish in musicals.

The record was bound to flatter the voices. But although Rex Harrison's singing is no more than conversational, every word comes through, and somehow his method seems exactly right for Higgins; moreover, it is worth noting that never have lyrics come so clearly from a modern chorus, spoken with intent and not drowned by the orchestra.

Taking the efficiency of this hand-picked chorus as read—it acts as well as it sings and dances—it is simplest to say of the principals that one cannot imagine any others in their place. At twenty-two Julie Andrews is a star from the upper firmament, born to make audiences love her—radiant, comic and completely unspoilt. The charming pachyderm that Mr. Harrison creates out of tweeded

egoism suavely bridges the gap between Shaw's hero and one sliding, albeit reluctantly, into romance; under the tweeds lurks a shining and elegant assurance. Stanley Holloway's Doolittle

REP SELECTIONS

Guildford, *The Lark*, Anouilh-Fry, to May 10th.
Salisbury, *The Waltz of the Toreadors*, Anouilh, to May 10th.
Bromley, *Summer of the 17th Doll*, to May 10th.
Theatre Royal, York, *The Ringer*, to May 10th.

is a performance to be hugged, and Robert Coote contrives to turn his blimpish Pickering, fielding slip so patiently for Higgins, into a solid comic character.

My Fair Lady is no disappointment. Queer as it may sound from a critic, I cannot wait to see it again.

If a thriller fails in the first ten minutes to anesthetize petty doubts, it is unlikely to persuade us through the rougher country ahead. *Something to Hide* is armed with surprises, and not bad ones, but by the time they arrive we have lost confidence in Leslie Sands' invention, and have mentally sacked his police inspector for his myopic conduct of the case. Complications, ringing a little out of tune, are rushed on us; we are never, as we should be, caught by the throat. The writing is mostly to blame, but both Mary Kerridge and Michael Gough might have done a little more to hold us. Only Alan Webb, as the bird-like north-country inspector, manages to establish a real person.

On the subject of homosexuality in a public school, *Quaint Honour* strikes such a nice balance that we end by wondering why Roger Gellert wrote it, if not to come down on one side or the other. Authority behaves as any parent hopes it would, with sympathy but firmness; at the same time the glib atheistic prefect who has lovers through the lower school and who seduces a shy, backward boy out of bravado is not in himself an unpleasant character but merely a clever rebel convinced of his own guiltlessness. The frankest of its kind we have seen, this play is also the most honest and unsentimental; it is written with tact and sincerity, but Mr. Gellert, who clearly knows his public school and on occasion can put its humours to neat comic use, gets fatally lost in long windy speeches of no dramatic value. His actors are good: John Richmond as the reasonable house-master, Philip Waddilove as his zealous head of house, John Charlesworth as the two-faced prefect, Roderick McLaren as a horribly knowing little brute and Michael Caridia as the shy victim. One

character is missing, the headmaster, who is not called in even for a sacking.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)
Expresso Bongo (Saville—30/4/58), musical satire on crooners. *Duel of Angels* (Apollo—30/4/58), for Vivien Leigh. *Not in the Book* (Criterion—16/4/58), first-rate comedy-thriller.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

The Young Lions—South Pacific

AT the end, the film adaptation of Irwin Shaw's novel *The Young Lions* (Director: Edward Dmytryk) has been softened into something easier for the ordinary sentimental filmgoer to take. The character for whom he has been feeling most sympathy survives, and the star he thinks highly of is not called on to make him feel uneasy by behaving in an unheroic fashion, as real people, however heroic, are sometimes driven to do. Nevertheless, these changes do not involve any serious wrenching of character or probability: the end may be sentimentalized, but it does not seem false. And the film as a whole is an impressive one, gripping, sometimes moving, often thrilling, very well done.

It is astonishing at last to look back and realize how much has happened in it. True, it runs for two hours and three-quarters; but even so, we wonder

how there can possibly have been time for *that* episode, and that, and that . . . It is pointless to suggest that "they tried to get too much in." Here is a story mainly about two men, an American and a German, how they went through the war and how their paths eventually crossed; and it would not be in effect this story without all the illustrative episodes. It does not, at the time, seem over-stuffed, and I doubt that anyone could be even for a moment bored.

A criticism of the film considered as a whole is that these episodes are too noticeably self-contained, that each one with the slightest of explanatory introductions could stand by itself as a short story. There is the opening one, in 1938, in which the American girl is having a carefree time with the Austrian ski instructor until she realizes that he approves of Hitler; there is the simple, moving love-story of the diffident young Jew and the New England girl; there is the bitter episode of the hard, narrow German captain, his sluttish wife, and the young lieutenant; there is the story of the persecution of the young Jew in his U.S. army company, and his fanatical fight against it; there is the dreadful little tale of the mutilated German captain, ending with his wife's casual, uncaring reference to the fact that he killed himself in hospital; there are the battle incidents in Africa and Europe; and there are innumerable others, all in their way admirably done, but all, as I say, with an air of being self-contained, each with a dramatic line or situation to round it off.

This makes the whole thing essentially



[*The Young Lions*

Lieutenant Christian Diestl—MARLON BRANDO

a set of illustrations to a theme. It is not a coherent and developing story, except in the sense that any moment of meeting can be made into the climax of a story by preliminary details about all the accidental circumstances that led up to it. But it is splendidly done, and I was soon absorbed enough to forget my irritation at the absurd (but in this instance unavoidable) device of using accented English to represent German. The character of the Austrian has been simplified and softened, and Marlon Brando plays him well within those limits. More notable is Montgomery Clift as the Jew; his scenes with Hope Lange are extraordinarily moving. And the battle episodes are among the most exciting (as well as the noisiest) ever.

The most striking and enjoyable things about the first production London has seen in Todd-AO, *South Pacific* (Director: Joshua Logan), are all things that could be enjoyed just as much in the CinemaScope we are used to. It is just not worth while for any fiction piece, least of all such an elaborately artificial work as a musical comedy, to try to make the audience feel as if it is on the spot. Naturalism fights incessantly with stage convention; the more real and convincing the scene and surroundings, the more absurdly unreal the hidden orchestra and the sudden breaking into song.

That being said . . . well, there are pleasing bits. Mitzi Gaynor does the "Wonderful Guy" number with captivating verve and skill, John Kerr and the charming French-Chinese eighteen-year-old France Nuyen weave their way through a fascinating underwater dance, some of the scenes are beautiful, the familiar tunes don't fail. But the thing tries to drown you in a huge bath of colour, light, melting and ringing and roaring and tinkling music, steamy emotion. 'The word for this production as a whole is *lush* (which is also, of course, the American word for a drunk).

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London: *Teacher's Pet* (30/4/58) is an outstandingly funny and enjoyable comedy, just a bit too long. The impressive Swedish allegory *The Seventh Seal* (19/3/58), Fellini's touching and amusing *Cabiria* (16/4/58), the ironically decorated novelette *La Garçonne* (30/4/58) and the one for everybody, *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57), continue.

Top release is *The Young Lions* (see above), and another unusually early one is the good action piece *Thunder Road* (23/4/58). There are also a remarkably unsentimental and straightforward Disney about a hunting dog, *Old Yeller*, and *Bonjour Tristesse*, a young people's best-seller, full of sunlight and frantic gaiety and charm and romantic places and brave breaking hearts and teen-age exhibitionism.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

The Talkers

I SUPPOSE the difference between argument and debate is "Free Speech," ATV's Sunday afternoon tournament of Left *versus* Right. Very entertaining it all is to be sure, although the proceedings are apt to follow a foreseeable pattern week by week. The teams had been slightly changed when last I looked in on them. On the left Michael Foot was joined by Wolf Mankowitz, to whose multitudinous activities there seems to be no end. Foot was waspish as usual—pouncing, darting, touchy as a rattlesnake—now sardonically gay, now white with righteous, proletarian rage at the fiendish Tory villainy of meek little W. J. Brown. Mankowitz, shrewd, bland, and somewhat lardy behind his enigmatic drift of cigarette smoke, seemed to bring a whiff of the oriental bazaar into the proceedings. His eyes moved warily as he talked his hesitant way into a strong line of argument, gradually gaining strength and confidence, and then digging himself in behind an unassailable position. Charles Curran, on the right, contrived to be grim and jolly at the same time, his fierce, rumbling attacks dying away to fall like confetti on the opposition. His great, craggy head seems to be still aching from the blows of the sculptor's chisel, his eyebrows are stuck dramatically on with spirit-gum, and he earnestly rolls out his sweet nothings with a voice of tired thunder. As for W. J. Brown, the old stager of the right, he still looks far too cosy a little chap to be exposed to the slings and arrows of outrageous Foot, but keeps his end up all the same with a sort of dogged Civil Service imperturbability. Together, this group would probably present a fair cross-section of opinion in this country, no matter what the topic. They make good after-luncheon viewing, whichever side you happen to be on.

What with his laboured delivery, his unhurried perambulations from prop to beloved prop, and the terrifying impression he gives from time to time of not

being too sure where his argument has led him, I'm afraid I find Dr. Bronowski's popular science programmes occasionally tedious. Yet I will always watch him, for he goes to endless trouble, and he is a brilliant and a dedicated man. If only he would put a spurt on, and not worry quite so much about the duffer at the back of the hall getting everything down in longhand, his "New Horizon" (A-R) could be one of the chief delights of the little screen.

The first two instalments of the B.B.C.'s Evolution series called "500 Million Years" were examples of how a scientific programme should be presented. Hardly any time was wasted, the experts were crisp and confident, their exhibits made everything crystal clear and the whole thing moved as precisely and inevitably as a piece of good music. An enthralling subject, handled in a manner deserving the highest praise.

Another recurring pleasure is "Monitor" (B.B.C.), the stimulating scrap-book for arty chaps. I still remember a particularly enjoyable session which included Tchaikovsky, Buffet, the Brussels Exhibition (splendid pictures) and part of "A Resounding Tinkle." The latter I had not seen on the stage, and I was grateful for a chance to sample it. I thought it embarrassingly old-fashioned, but that's not the point. The important thing is that I was allowed to see it, and one likes to know what the *avant gardes* are up to.

The most unbelievable hero I can recall seeing in any thriller serial is the Englishman in "The Money Man" (B.B.C.) For all I know he may by this time have turned out to be a private eye in disguise. I hope so. I fear I left him to it a couple of instalments ago, and am now hopefully enmeshed in "The Truth About Melandrin" (A.B.C.). I can foresee no joy of this either: the formula is threadbare.

I find I am a slave to habit-forming drugs. I can give up neither cigarettes nor "Panorama," over which Mr. Dimpleby continues to gloom like a ponderous cloud. I must really make an effort to cut him down to one a fortnight.

HENRY TURTON

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT

IT is not worth while treading again the hard highway of the week's events. Our business is rather with its comedies. The Opposition Front Bench has decided that on the whole it is better to be uninformed than silent about problems of defence. The risk of sealed lips sitting on the Front Bench and open mouths shouting behind them is too great for insecure politicians. The Prime Minister was anxious to make it clear that he had no wish to "slap down" Dr. Edith Summerskill, but Mr. Shinwell was not able to detect any similar forbearance in his colleague, Mr. Callaghan.

It has been a week, too, of unusual combinations. There was Mr. Nigel Birch calling down, like Gray's Bard, a curse on the shrinking head of Mr. Molson for his philistine abandonment of the trees in the Royal Parks to the Park Lane traffic, and supported in his curse by Mr. Greenwood. Earlier in the week the unprecedented combination of Sir Thomas Moore, an Irishman, and Mr. Emrys Hughes, a Welshman, but both Members for Ayrshire constituencies, went to the Prime Minister over the head of the Postmaster-General to tell him that if Bobby Burns' head

does not appear on a postage stamp they will know the reason why.

If they should meet with success we can only expect a campaign among the "mere English" to put Mr. Heathcoat Amory's head there for twopence-halfpenny as well. For at the moment Mr. Heathcoat Amory simply cannot put a foot wrong with the House or the public, however hard he tries. They are not content to cheer him when he is right. They cheer him just as loudly when he is wrong and gets up and says as much. Anyone present in the House on Tuesday for the first time would have imagined that retrospective legislation and taxes on miners' helmets were devilish devices invented by some flint-hearted predecessor from which Mr. Heathcoat Amory was nobly liberating us. No one would have guessed that St. George had brought his own dragon. Yet the rumour has but to go round that miners' helmets only got into the Budget by mistake and everyone agrees how decent it was of Mr. Heathcoat Amory to make a mistake like that and then to own up to it. What is the reason for this so great love? Is it simply that the alternative to Mr. Heathcoat Amory is Mr. Harold Wilson? Not being Mr. Harold Wilson is indeed a formidable asset, but one cannot make a political career entirely upon that accident. There are too many competitors for the qualification.

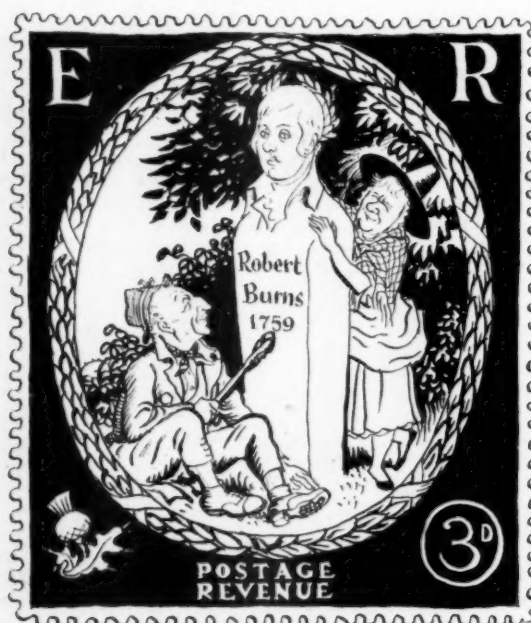
Both Tuesday's and Wednesday's question time showed the front benchers at their worst in their abuse of their privileges. They are now Parliament's most serious enemies. On Tuesday it was Mr. Harold Wilson cross-questioning the Chancellor about his Finance Bill concessions, on Wednesday Mr. Robens cross-questioning Mr. Macleod about the bus crisis. It may be a



Mr. Nigel Birch

reasonable tradition that the responsible Opposition Front Bench spokesman should be allowed the first question on such an occasion, but it is hard to see why the Speaker should allow him to go on asking supplementaries and making speeches under the pretence of asking supplementaries for the rest of time to the total exclusion of the rights of all other Members. It required Dr. Pickthorn to bring Mr. Wilson to an end on Tuesday, and he did so very effectively—every inch a Dean. Nothing could bring Mr. Robens to an end on Wednesday.

Thursday was Whanging Day, and the Angry Middle-Aged Men really came into their own. There was more hard hitting than there had been for a very long time. It started off with an attempt to rag the Prime Minister about going on with the nuclear tests, but there was nothing very much to that. That is common form. Then they got on to council houses, and Mr. Page of Crosby gave a long list of wealthy people in different parts of the country who allegedly live in subsidized council houses. Mr. Lindgren bluntly suggested that this list was bogus. The denial direct was a bit crude. But the real row was between Mr. Edelman and Mr. Walker-Smith about vaccine. Had there been an undertaking, Mr. Edelman wanted to know, to give preference to Glaxo and Burroughs Welcome vaccine? This suggestion roused the Minister. Mr. Edelman, he thought, "had plumbed depths of squalor that I have not previously experienced." Let the Opposition go into the lobby "with shame in their hearts and defeat for their portion." The latter sentence was perhaps a little Buzzfuzzian, but the first was good, sincere, straightforward hitting, and it was a relief to hear something so obviously genuine for a change, and it did us all good. PERCY SOMERSET





Coals from Newcastle

THE coal industry is looking up but, alas! at the moment when the demand for its products is looking down. Twelve years or so ago the late Mr. Ernest Bevin, then Foreign Secretary, was in the habit of asking rhetorically "What couldn't I do with another twenty million tons of coal?" Every country at that time was pleading with us for a larger quota of British coal, in return for which it would have paid almost any price in terms of economic and political concessions.

In those years the exportable coal surplus was not there, and in the ensuing decade Britain, for the first time in its history, became a net importer of coal. "Coals to Newcastle" was no longer a definition of the ludicrous but became a plain statement of fact. Now output is rising as a result of mechanization. The same unfortunately is true of coal industries all over Europe. Newcastle can export again but the markets are no longer there.

The machines that now cut coal produce a great deal of unsaleable small coal and more than the usual proportion of sternly incombustible slate and rock. To deal with this the Coal Board has in recent months taken long leases of quarries in which to dump this coal—the most up-to-date illustration of maintaining full employment by the process of digging holes and filling them up again.

There are, however, one or two gleams of hope in this otherwise dismal picture. One of them comes from the gas industry which is now experimenting with a new process of making gas—hydrogenation is its name—which will use any old coal, extract all the by-products and reduce it to its ultimate ash residual. In this way it is claimed that more than 90 per cent of the efficiency of the raw material can be extracted, which compares with the miserable 17 per cent extracted from coal burnt in Britain's open grates whence the remaining 83 per cent disappears up the chimney.

A new plant is to be operated at the Partington works of the North-Western Gas Board. It will not look like a gas-works at all but like a gleaming and highly prophylactic chemical works. It is hoped that it will produce appreciably cheaper gas. One other benefit (some may deem it a defect) is that it will also produce a virtually non-poisonous gas.

The gas industry is also making a most interesting experiment in importing natural gas at extremely low temperatures from the main oil-producing areas. Before long the first cargo of natural gas will be shipped here from Venezuela in a specially built tanker and will be fed into the domestic gas pipes of southern England. If it is successful this shipment will be the first of a long line of tankers bringing gas to Britain from the Middle East as well as from Venezuela.

Despite the competition of oil the coal industry is far from dead. The

In the Country



Without Credit

TWENTY years ago the most important implements in English farming were a whistle and a dog. It didn't pay to cultivate; many farm-houses were derelict. It took the war to put agriculture on its feet. Since then, hundreds of millions of pounds have been pumped into farming by way of one subsidy or another. We have endured or enjoyed twenty years of feather-bedding from both Socialist and Tory governments. There have been grants on manures, drainage, road-making and reclamation. There are subsidies on renovation of cow shippens, farm cottages and the construction of silos. All of which were intended, presumably, to help the small-holder, the farmer who has not sufficient capital of his own to improve his property. And I dare say a few idealists among our legislators have hoped that these subsidies would help to lessen the discrepancy between the rich farmer and the poor one. Yet the opposite has been the effect.

Motoring over Wales, Cornwall and the North of England to-day you will come across innumerable derelict small-

capital investment going into it is massive, and the orders for wagons, cutting and haulage machinery are likely to feed the ancillary industries for a long time to come. One likely move is a Government-aided effort to induce more and more coal to be carried by rail. At present an absurdly high proportion of the coal transported in Britain goes by road and thus adds to the congestion of an already overtaxed road system.

Among the many firms in Britain which are likely to continue to derive substantial and even increased business from the coal industry are the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Co., the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Co., Allen and Son (Tipton), the Butterley Company of Derby, English Electric, and a number of others which the investing public can but admire and envy from afar since their shares are not publicly quoted.

LOMBARD LANE

holdings where the barns are still badly roofed and without water.

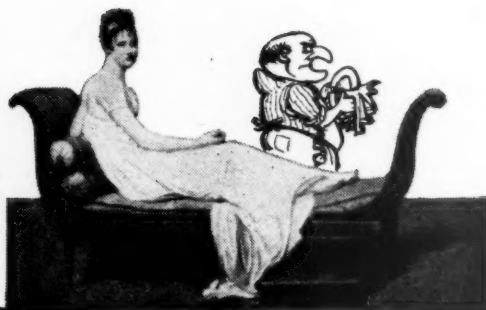
How is it that none of the subsidies has reached these people, whereas the big farms can be seen with concrete drives, chromium-plated shippens, grinning with all modern conveniences? One of the reasons is that most of the subsidies have been towards the cost of improvement and have assumed that the farmer himself could find the rest of the capital, forgetting that the small farmer who started in the 'thirties with £200 or £300 has, with inflation, no spare cash for improvement.

To-day, credit restrictions make it difficult for him to avail himself of these subsidies. Apart from this economic factor there is another almost as important, which is that grants had to be applied for in triplicate. Innumerable forms with dozens of questions had to be completed. This bureaucratic rigmarole dissuaded the small man from attempting the hurdle, whereas the big farmer has taken it in his stride. The result is that the discrepancy between the man farming one thousand acres of land and the chap with three cows and twenty hens on the edge of the moors is now greater than it was before.

Many farmers think that subsidies ought to be scrapped altogether and replaced by giving agriculture access to its own credit. In other words, the establishment of a Land Bank. We would not need the public to subscribe its capital. Our capital could be England. What cash is more hard than that?

RONALD DUNCAN

FOR
WOMEN



Plot Your Party Graphically

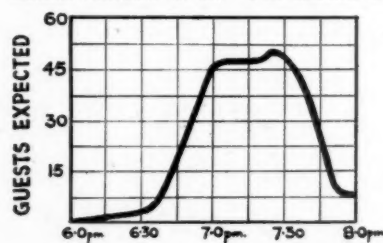
YOU too, like Mr. T. S. Eliot's Tiresias, are awaiting the expected guest. Every contingency has, you hope, been foreseen. Remembering that hungry occasion when the first guest, en route for four hours of opera, cleared every dish, you have concealed some plates of delicacies to be released later. The drink provided is gauged to cheer the more hard-headed without knocking out the moderates. The spotted lilies that you bought to add an exotic touch are working full time, and the super-exoticism of their scent, which disconcerted you earlier, has been traced to a leak in the tubing of the gas poker. For once your new dress looks as if it is going to develop into a faithful friend instead of a bitter enemy, and your hair has stayed as previously fixed.

Why then, you ask me, is your heart black with foreboding? What have you to fear? We both know the answer only too well—the Unreliability of the Expected Guests. Group your furniture, brew your martinis, and smother your prawns in mayonnaise, but never imagine you can control your guests. How can you, when they behave as if your party was a junction on the railway between the psychiatrist and the Nature Cure? However, by taking a look at the accompanying chart, though your spirits may not rise, you will at least have some idea of what to expect if forty-five people

have accepted your invitation to "come in for a drink" between 6 and 8 p.m.

You may be surprised at the low level of the graph between 6 p.m. and 6.30, but that of course is the agonizing half-hour when the two guests who least wish to meet (some silly quarrel about a flat, a car or a wife) arrive simultaneously and conduct a Guelph and Ghibelline duel over your body, which you only wish was dead.

From 6.30 to 7 p.m. the graph rises steeply, indicating that Rush Hour is on. This is the only moment when, lost in the crowd, you will be able to hear any gossip, or indeed make any human contacts at all. The hostess is



usually treated as a leper and only voluntarily spoken to by someone who wants to meet someone else.

At 7.15 p.m. the graph rises to a peak above the maximum number expected. This is the moment when some prowler in the party jungle remembers your address and arrives with several uninvited guests, collected at earlier ports

of call. You can only hope that these will be total strangers, and not old chums you had decided not to ask.

By 7.45 p.m. the graph has fallen smartly, the decks having been cleared of those with genuine dinner dates and those with something in the oven at home.

Only the élite of the Drink-to-the-Last-Drop Corps remain at 8 p.m. And now there are two courses open to you, supposing you have neither the good will nor the raw materials to feed these stragglers. Either drive them out and shut the door after them, or lock up any unopened bottles and beat it yourself with a chosen companion. In the latter case you will need no help from me in plotting your graph for the rest of the evening.

VIOLET POWELL

VIOLET POWELL

"The Pram now Standing..."

THINKING of travelling with a pram? Of course you are, since Granny lives a hundred miles away and never paid you for that pound of knitting wool.

First, plan your luggage. Don't pile more than four large suitcases across the pram, or baby will not see the puffs. And pack the rather risqué items, such as Totty Pots, out of sight before you start. Too late to think of this on a crowded platform, and if you leave the T.P. like a top hat on your luggage you'll be sorry. (Ours toppled off unnoticed in the guard's van and was thrown after us from the train, breaking the window of a Ladies' Room.)

Don't be alarmed if the ticket for your pram announces "DOG." If there's trouble at the other end, snatch up your nylon Teddy Bear and bark convincingly.

On reaching the platform you must

Career Girls : 9 — County Cricketer

IT still makes a lot of old diehards very distressed

1 To contemplate two teams of lady cricketers playing a Test.

It's the challenge to their virility, no doubt, that makes them feel so cross. When they think of those delicate creatures engaging in anything more strenuous than an occasional game of mixed hockey or lacrosse.

guess the spot where the guard's van will come to rest. Then, as the train draws in, lift down your cases one by one, snatch baby rudely from his snug, warm nest and belt along the platform to the spot the guard's van is really making for. Then belt back again to where you inadvertently left your handbag and the pram, and ask the guard for help. (No need to be dramatic.)

Having watched the pram into the van, dash up and down the platform with your luggage and the child until you find a vacant seat. Flop down, apologizing. Then jump up and fling the window open, craning out to see if they have put your pram back on to the platform. Search through your handbag for the label you should have attached to the pram and hand it to a porter, with two shillings, to tie to "the cream one with the navy hood." Relax.

Three stops before your destination, rise and tug your luggage from the rack. Carry the pieces one by one into the corridor, holding baby horizontally under the left arm. Grovel under the seat for baby's mitten. Apologize again to the large man near the door and lurch to the toilet to mop baby's nice bubbles from your shoulder.

Take up your stand by the door at the end of the corridor. As soon as the train stops, leap out crying "Porter!" Turn back for your luggage, as the porter cannot possibly arrive in time. Leave half your luggage on the platform and half inside the train and dash towards the guard's van. Explain that the black pram with the white hood isn't yours, although it has your label on its handle. Demand a reasonable explanation as to why your pram was put off at the stop before the last, and threaten to take the number of the guard.

Listen in to the stationmaster's telephone conversation with the stop before the last. Then suggest he rings up the next stop ahead, as you left half your luggage in the train. Find the buffet, and ask why it doesn't open on a Saturday.

When Granny arrives, half an hour late as usual, change her a shilling through the barrier, so that she can buy a platform ticket, and subside in tears upon a sooty bench. Vow you will never set foot outside the house again until baby is six feet tall.

HAZEL TOWNSON

The Bikinis of Wigmore St.

IT is said that some of Debenham and Freebody's customers used to be so rich, and so idle, that they would drop in for a new dress every day.

This story was neither confirmed nor yet denied by past members of the staff at a party given to launch a Calypso Collection in the new beach-wear department. The customers of one retired buyer, ex-model gown department, were certainly all very well-lined, as the term was then. They were the wives of solidly established men—"but not *always* the wives," she unexpectedly added. They were women who could have dressed at a couture house, but felt happier on the old familiar floors where they were petted by the same fitters and assistants year after year.

It was for a long time a family business. In 1814 the first Mr. Debenham, from Debenham in Suffolk, took over a small drapery business in Wigmore Street. The Freebodys arrived on the scene by marrying into the Debenhams. With this background, and with a solid tradition expressed in such things as the imposing mahogany and marble fittings in the ladies' room, Debenhams do not spring to mind as the place to go for a bikini. But we must revise our thoughts, for Debenhams have revised their policy and now

cater for a younger, less well-lined breed of customer.

The beach wear collection was presented to the music of a Banana Boat Calypso Quartet, amid a décor of a thousand real bananas and other tropicalities. There were bikinis as exiguous as bikinis can be; there were shorts as short as shorts can be; and pants as tapered as the female form can take them. Cover-up jackets covered only from top to bottom, leaving the whole length of the lower limbs bare . . . in beach wear, now, the balance of fashion is so loaded that we can be completely covered at the top, in long-sleeved silk shirts by Pucci, our faces concealed by sombreros and sunglasses, and yet have every inch of leg exposed to the glare of the sun and of the more particular continental *restaurateurs*. Fortunately there are beach sets of bikini or playsuit with cover-up top, which also include matching skirts for land-roving *comme il faut*. ALISON ADBURGHAM

☆

"One woman dental surgeon who has been in practice for over 30 years told me: 'The hours in private practice can be limited to fit in with home life and, since a great deal of future dentistry will be among children, women have certain immediate advantages over men. There is a great feeling among patients that women dentists "don't hurt as much"; she chuckled.'—*Daily Telegraph*

Don't care for that chuckle.



"Oh, dear, and I've made four dozen of them."

Continuing

I'M ALL RIGHT, JACK

By ALAN HACKNEY

It is the day after the works outing of Missiles Ltd., where Stanley Winchursh, a nephew of Mr. Tracepurcel, one of the directors, has just got a job. "Kitey" is the shop steward. "Knowlesy" is one of Stanley's colleagues.

IN the morning the effects of the outing were plain to see. Almost without exception the sea air and the careless pleasure of the day had left their dreadful mark, and the Monday morning clocking-on was for most an even grimmer affair than usual. A large number of those who had been on the outing failed to beat the clock, and this added to the store of latent savage resentment that was generally felt at being back at work.

"Morning all," said Knowlesy in fraternal greeting. "Though the heart bleeds, the show must go on. Where's old Kitey? Died of wounds?"

"I hope you enjoyed your bread and circuses," said Kitey primly. "You've had your little treat, lads, now it's time to start working your guts out for the grasping shareholders, God bless 'em."

Kitey began his toil in some gloom. Mrs. Kite had been particularly intractable when she had returned, towards one in the morning, in a Rolls Royce. She had, she reported, greatly enjoyed herself. At the Siamese Cat Club, to which she had apparently been taken, there had been an amusing cabaret, and dancing. Bertie, it appeared, was a lovely dancer, and it was Kitey's fault she had gone, because he never took her anywhere. Who was Bertie? Bertie was Mr. Tracepurcel. Well, what if he *was* a representative of the lousy bloody boss-class? He and that other gentleman, Kitey might be interested to hear, were more amusing

than all Kitey's wet committees rolled into one.

Mr. Waters, the time-and-motion man, prepared for action.

He set out his six stop-watches in a row on his desk, and began arranging them in his pockets. Outside breast pocket, hip pocket, one in each jacket pocket, one in each trouser pocket. Mr. Tracepurcel was absolutely right: greater efficiency *was* the answer. Mr. Waters was very glad that someone on the Board of Directors had given the right lead. There was a problem, and it needed to be tackled with courage. No ifs and buts; no respecting the sacred cows of immemorial practice; no more being put off by a defeatist Personnel Manager; no more lagging behind America.

There was no doubt at all that the most promising field for improvement was that of handling: the books were unanimous on that point. Now that Missiles had had fork-lift trucks for a full two years there must surely be big improvements possible in the handling times for materials on their way round the factory. Why had there not been? How long did it *really* take to do some of these operations?

With a keen sense of mission Mr. Waters made his way to the Stores Block.

Stanley's week began very well. The bubble car started at once, and on the

way to Missiles all the traffic lights turned green for him. Just for once he arrived in time to clock on effortlessly, and he approached his fork-lift truck metaphorically rubbing his hands for action. After an enjoyable day by the sea, and with the prospect of a quite possible marriage to an attractive and energetic young woman he felt ready for anything and keen to start saving up from income.

Most of the men were rather subdued. When Stanley came in with a cheery "Good morning, good morning!" there was little response. Even Knowlesy merely said "Oh, only you, squire? And here was me going to put me collar on."

"All right this morning, Knowlesy?" asked Stanley brightly, unplugging his truck from the battery charger.

"Steady on, cock," advised Knowlesy. "You'll find yourself taking on a bit too much. You remind me of Curly Graham the way you're going on, and you don't want *that* to happen. Watch out you don't bite off too much, squire."

He shook his head sadly and drove away at a leisurely pace as Mr. Morris came out of his cabin with Stanley's schedule for the day.

The morning had advanced sufficiently far for the week's work to have been properly started when Stanley, busy at transferring a load of crated castings one by one from the far end of the racks to the loading bays, became aware of a man leaning on the end of a stack and scrabbling in a pocket. He was still there when Stanley came back again, and this time ventured a good morning.

"I wonder if you could help me at all?" he went on. "I'm rather a new boy here."

"Oh, so am I," said Stanley. "What's the trouble?"

"Oh, no trouble. I was just interested in that truck of yours."

"Ah yes. Very handy, aren't they? Look at all the fetching and carrying I'm doing, all on my own. That's progress, you see. Once upon a time there'd be dozens of men staggering about with all this stuff, but now there's just me."

"It isn't difficult?"

"Oh no, not a bit. It's extremely simple."

"Could you lift two of those castings at a time, instead of one?"

"Oh, I expect so. I can carry two tons but the union doesn't like us to do it that way."

"How long does it take you to lift one of those and make a trip to the other end and back?"

"I don't know. I just keep on doing it till they're finished."

"I suppose it might take longer carrying two, if you weren't used to it?"

"I shouldn't think so. Let's see." Stanley edged the truck forward and collected two of the crates on his forks.

"Here we go, and before you can say productivity I'll be back."

He departed at the truck's smartest pace and was, indeed, soon back. Mr. Waters stop-watched it at two minutes eighteen.

"There we are," said Stanley on his return. "They certainly are jolly good little trucks. What would you say that took?"

"Oh, about three or four minutes, I suppose. That's the lever for lifting, isn't it?"

"Yes, that's right. It only takes a couple of lessons to get the hang of it, but you do have to remember plugging it in for battery charging. Did you say three minutes? That seems a bit long."

"Four, I thought. Does it get slower near the end of a day, like those electric milk vans?"

"Oh no. Four minutes? I wouldn't have thought it was as much as that.

Let's have another go." This he did and this time Mr. Waters timed it at two minutes nine seconds.

"I'm not keeping you from your work, am I?" he asked when Stanley came back.

"Oh no, I can do this while I'm talking," Stanley found it stimulating that someone should take a keen interest in his affairs. "What sort of work are you going to do here at Missiles?" he asked.

"Oh, I'm just having a general look round," said Mr. Waters, suddenly diving into his hip pocket. "I thought I'd start looking round this department first. Will that thing lift *three*, I wonder?"

When Mr. Kite put his head round the door he saw the time-and-motion

door of the shed he let the melody die away. He was momentarily puzzled at their appearance.

The time-and-motion man looked round in a startled way, and waving a gesture of farewell, made to go about his business. When he reached the door, loud hissing sounds filled the air around him as he excused his way through the group of drivers.

"Oi!" called Kitey from the doorway to Stanley. "What's up? You training for the Olympics or something?"

"What?" said Stanley. "No, of course not. Just seeing what this truck can do."

"What you want to do that in front of young Soapy for?" demanded Perce Carter.

"You done it now," said Knowlesy.

"Done what?"

"You'll see soon enough," said Kitey. "They'll publish a stop-watch report tomorrow, with new rates for these jobs. That's what you've done. And you actually speeded up for him. I dunno."

A groan, more of despair than hostility, rose from the drivers.

"I'm sorry about all this business," said

Stanley. "I had no idea, but honestly, it wasn't harder and it got it done in half the time."

"Oh yes," said Kitey. "They'd only need half the drivers at that rate. You want your head seen to."

"I don't suppose it matters to you," said Perce Carter, "but *we* need the money, mate."

"Oh, but so do I," protested Stanley, "in fact I could do with a good bit more."

"You're going the right perishing way to get it, and no mistake," said Perce Carter. "They'll be cutting the rate to about half. Why don't you abide by the terms of the agreement? We got on all right a couple of years the way it was."

"Oh, I don't expect they'll alter the rate, Perce," said Knowlesy, "not if old Kitey tells 'em we'll walk out. Eh, Kitey?"

"You don't want to be too sure," said Kitey. "You heard what Trac-purcel was saying on the outing."



man with his right-hand jacket-pocket stop-watch in his hand, and the back view of Stanley's truck proceeding at a spanking pace towards the loading bays with three crates aboard.

Mr. Kite took in the situation instantly. He turned abruptly about, walked out again, and getting out his bird-warbler blew loud and furious calls on it.

For a few seconds there was no response, but presently fork-lift trucks emerged from various buildings, and from all directions converged on him.

Stanley, merrily singing a vigorous negro work-song, trundled rapidly back down the racks.

"You're robbin' ma pocket,

Yes, you're robbin' ma pocket,"

he sang

"Yousa robbin' ma PAH-kit

Of-a silver and gold."

He seemed to have found his natural rhythm.

When he caught sight of his twenty fellow-drivers, bunched scowling at the

"No, I didn't," said Knowlesy. "I was out in the Gents."

"Well, it looks to me as if they're reckoning to get a bit tough, talking about inflation and more efficiency and getting prices down by harder work."

"Oh, I wasn't working *hard*," protested Stanley, "just quicker."

"You was working like a bloody black," said Perce Carter.

"That's it!" cried Kitey. "You remember those black chaps coming round. You know what I reckon, brothers? I reckon they think they can get away with a lower rate on these trucks because they can get coloured blokes to do it if we won't. Like the railways. And you remember what old Tracepurcel said about working with anyone, no matter what their creed or colour? I'm off to see Creepy Crawley."

"Well, of all the rotten lousy tricks," said Perce Carter.

"Oh, I don't think it was anything like that," said Stanley. "Those black men who came round were only from the Coloured Conference. I know because a friend of mine showed them round."

"A friend of yours?" asked Kitey, suspiciously. "What friend?"

"Well, he's called Wallace Hardy-Freeman. At the Foreign Office. Oh, good morning, Mr. Hitchcock."

The Personnel Manager had appeared in the doorway behind the drivers, who all turned round to look at him.



Mr. Hitchcock came in with a suspicious look at Stanley.

"What's the trouble, Mr. Kite?" he asked. "This chap Windrush letting you down or something?"

"Was it you put the management on to stop-watching these trucks?" asked Kitey.

"Stop-watching? Oh believe me no," said Mr. Hitchcock. "Without consulting the union? You know me better than that. What exactly have you been up to, Windrush?"

"Funny you turning up like this, then," said Kitey, before Stanley could reply. "I'm getting on to Mr. Crawley straight away."

"Look here, Kite," said Mr. Hitchcock, "I came here to have a chat to Windrush. I don't know what Mr. Waters is up to. Damn it, I'm Personnel Manager here, aren't I? I don't

have to apply to the Branch Committee of the General before I talk to a blasted member, do I? I just happen to know Windrush personally, that's all."

"Another friend of yours?" asked Perce Carter sarcastically of Stanley. "Creep."

"Don't pretend you wasn't aware what was going on," cried Kitey, in some heat. "Don't think I don't know what way the wind's blowing. I'm reporting the entire episode to the Branch Committee."

"You do that, by all means," recommended Mr. Hitchcock, "then perhaps they'll send someone to tell me what's going on."

"I know the way management policy's going," cried Kitey. "But I warn you, we're not going to step aside for any black men as easily as you think. Come on, brothers."

He led the drivers dramatically out, leaving Mr. Hitchcock facing Stanley.

"Black men?" said Mr. Hitchcock. "What on earth's this? Windrush, what the hell have you done?"

With a menacing look he hurried back to his office.

(To be continued)

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Reg'd at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Entered as 2nd-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y., P.O., 1903. Postage of this issue: Gt. Britain and Eire 4d.; Canada 14d.* Elsewhere Overseas 41d.† Mark Wrapper top left-hand corner ***Canadian Magazine Post" ††Printed Papers—Reduced Rate."

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